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Living Dangerously

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STORIES OF ADVENTURE

**On Land, at Sea
in the Air
and Investigating
the Unknown**

**COLLECTED BY
CECIL MADDEN**

**London
George Allen & Unwin Ltd
Museum Street**

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1936

These true stories of adventure bearing the title *Living Dangerously* were originally broadcast to listeners in the British Empire through the British Broadcasting Corporation's Empire Station at Daventry, in a series bearing the same name. Owing to the interest which they created it has been decided to collect them together in book form in the present volume.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>Introduction by CECIL MADDEN</i>	13

At Sea

1. THE WOLVES OF THE SEA Herbert G. Ponting, F.R.G.S.	17
2. PHOTOGRAPHING SHARKS J. E. Williamson	24
3. DIVING Thomas Ferris Milne	30
4. "Q" BOAT ADVENTURES Lieutenant Thomas Hughes, D.S.O., R.N.R.	43
5. DELIVERING A YACHT Commander J. C. N. Macmillan, O.B.E., R.N. (Retired)	49
6. WINDJAMMING ROUND THE HORN Jerry Nunn	58
7. BAY OF BISCAY Cecil Madden	67
8. THE VOYAGE OF THE <i>TAI-MO-SHAN</i> Lt.-Commander Martyn Sherwood, R.N. (Retired)	70
9. SHAKING HANDS WITH A HURRICANE "Sinbad"	78

The Explorer

10. HAZARDS OF EXPLORING Martin Lindsay	87
11. GAMBIAN GAMBLE Rex Hardinge	93

	PAGE
12. CAPE TO CAIRO ON FOOT R. A. Monson	101
13. TREKKING ACROSS TIBET Ronald Kaulback	109
14. EXPEDITION TO LAKE RUDOLF V. E. Fuchs	115
15. TRAVELS IN LURISTAN Miss Freya Stark	121
16. CAMEROONS Ivan T. Sanderson, F.L.S., F.R.G.S.	126
17. VOLCANO Commander G. M. Dyott	132
18. ESKIMO Captain H. T. Munn	135
19. NORTHERN VOYAGE Isobel W. Hutchison	144
20. TRAVELLING WITH RED INDIANS H. Salmon	151

The Naturalist

21. ENCOUNTERS WITH WILD ANIMALS Cherry Kearton	159
22. BIG GAME Major A. Radclyffe Dugmore	166
23. A GAME WARDEN IN UGANDA Captain C. R. S. Pitman, D.S.O., M.C.	173
24. INSECTS AND PLANTS FROM AFRICA F. W. Edwards	184
25. THE GOLDEN EAGLE Captain C. W. R. Knight, M.C., F.R.P.S., F.Z.S. .	191
26. FILMING IN THE FROZEN NORTH Robert Flaherty	200

CONTENTS

9

In the Air

	PAGE
27. MY FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA AND BACK Jean Batten	209
28. FALLING THROUGH THE AIR Robert Wyndham	211

The Mountaineer

29. ASSAULTS ON EVEREST Hugh Ruttledge	217
30. NANDA DEVI AND THE GANGES Eric Shipton	223
31. ROUND MOUNT WADDINGTON ON SKIS Wing-Commander E. B. Beauman	229

“News”

32. SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT Harry J. Greenwall	237
33. OUT WITH A CAMERA FOR NEWS-REELS Tommy Scales	242

Other Dangers

34. AN EAST END DETECTIVE Ex-Detective Sergeant B. Leeson	253
35. SPEED RECORDS Sir Malcolm Campbell, M.B.E.	261

And the Unknown

36. INVESTIGATING HAUNTED HOUSES J. C. Cannell	269
37. OCCULTISM IN INDIA Colonel Lionel James, C.B.E., D.S.O.	279

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	OPPOSITE PAGE
H. G. Ponting Escaping from Killer Whales	20
A West Indian Diver Knifing a Man-eater Shark	24
The <i>Amity</i> with the Racing Mast in evidence	50
Near the Centre of the Ice-Cap, Greenland	92
El Molo Native, Lake Rudolf, Uganda	116
Two Pictures of the Golden Eagle	192
Robert Wyndham Jumping out of an Aeroplane	212
A Speed Record: Sir Malcolm Campbell	264

INTRODUCTION

EXPLORATION, whether Arctic, Antarctic, Equatorial, or any other, gives all of us a thrill, wherever we may live, for it represents the work of brave men pioneering in the cause of science and discovery. To my mind it does more than that; it stirs the heart and commands respect for the spirit of endurance and adventure which binds all men together with a common bond in times of stress.

One thing is certain: that living dangerously is a state of mind, not a state of affairs. This I have proved time and again in contact with true story tellers. Invariably I have had to drag their story out of them. "Nothing has ever happened to me" is nearly always the complaint of the genuine adventurer. "Nothing to make a song about—certainly nothing worth writing about...."

I once met a man who had fought in the Foreign Legion, had been thrown overboard by pirates, had suffered untold privation and exposure, had been torpedoed, and finally, maimed in an earthquake, but who still protested that these things were all in the day's work, and might have happened to anybody!

This book begins with a story told by the late Herbert G. Ponting, one of the most charming and modest figures in the society of world explorers, and whose death leaves a gap which will be deeply felt. His late chief, Captain Scott, wrote of him in his Journal: "He is an artist in love with his work." Ponting was keenly interested in this series of true adventures, and had consented to relate adventures of his in Japan and India. Now, alas, they will never be told.. But these

words, which he spoke to me less than a month before he died, represent the spirit of these human stories, and are worth repeating:

"Love of adventure is the birthright of every properly constituted British boy. It is the foundation on which the Empire was built, and the spirit that inspires not only exploration, but science, invention, and in fact, every kind of progress. Even business enterprise is founded upon it. We hear a lot nowadays about 'safety first', and no doubt it is in many ways a most admirable maxim. But it does not appeal to explorers. If you hope to force nature to reveal the secrets she guards so jealously, you must be prepared to give up, for the time being, all the things that many people value most—things like home, friends, comforts, and luxuries. And you must be prepared to face hardships and dangers, and even death. The real explorer finds sacrifices and risks simply part of the job. Enthusiasm for the cause warrants anything."

With those words as inspiration, I commend to you these wayfarers whom I have had the honour of knowing, who have searched for life and found it—to say the least—exciting.

CECIL MADDEN

AT SEA

I

THE WOLVES OF THE SEA

by HERBERT G. PONTING, F.R.G.S.

DURING many years of travel in search of picturesque material for my pen and camera—travel which has taken me three times round the world, and to within a thousand miles of each of the Poles—I have had more than one narrow squeak, and one of my “closest calls” occurred when I was in the Antarctic as a member of Captain Scott’s last Expedition, and was attacked by some of the most ferocious creatures that inhabit the seas—Killer Whales.

Whales sometimes become exhilarated in calm sunny weather, and leap out of the sea, perhaps from sheer joy of life. This is called “breaching”. I have seen Hump-back Whales do this off the coast of California; and once I saw a Blue Whale perform a remarkable feat of this nature in the Antarctic. It was cruising along in calm open water, and periodically it rose to blow. A sheet of thick sea-ice lay ahead of it, under which it dived. There was a long narrow opening in this ice, about a hundred yards ahead—a sort of lake—and in this open water, a minute later, the whale rose to continue its spoutings. When it reached the middle of the lake it humped its back, as whales always do before they dive deep—and it went under. I thought I had seen the last of it, but the huge creature suddenly appeared again, and breached high out of the water, all dripping and shining in the sun, and fell back into the sea with a splash that could

be heard for miles. What a subject for a picture! A hundred tons of living, glistening flesh, projected twenty feet into space through an opening in the ice! But though I waited expectantly and hopefully, with my camera focussed on the spot for several hours, the whale did not appear again.

All whales belong to the family Cetacea, and it is a large one, comprising ocean mammals ranging in size from the smallest dolphins to the leviathans of the sea. Midway between these extremes is the Killer Whale, or Grampus, which has been well-named by whaling-men "the wolf of the seas". It is a ferocious carnivorous dolphin which preys upon warm-blooded creatures such as seals, porpoises and penguins, and when full-grown it may be thirty feet or more in length. "Killers" do not only hunt their quarry in the sea; they also attack seals which are basking or sleeping on the ice. When they see the unsuspecting creatures from below, they band together, and striking the tops of their heads against the ice, they break it up, and the drowsy victims are hurled into the water and into the jaws of their crafty enemies. Incidentally, the stomach of a Killer Whale has been known to contain the remains of thirteen porpoises and fourteen seals.

During those two years in the Antarctic, I sometimes saw one of those thrilling dramas which happen daily in those farthermost seas. Once a pack of Killer Whales appeared near the ice-foot on the look-out for seals, and some of them must have been huge fellows, judging by the height of their dorsal fins, which rose five or six feet above the surface of the sea. The sinister shapes rose and sank, and rose again, as the evil creatures

cruised along—a small forest of spouts preceding each appearance of the fins. Suddenly a big female Weddell seal leapt out of the water ahead of the whales, and landed with a resounding smack on the ice. Instead of shuffling off to safety, the terrified animal immediately turned round and, bellowing loudly, hung over the ice-edge, peering into the water. I wondered what such madness meant; but in a moment a baby seal appeared, and made frantic efforts to struggle out to join its mother. Frenzied with fear for the life of her little one, the mother dashed backwards and forwards distractedly, as she watched the heaving fins drawing nearer every moment, whilst the baby, bleating piteously, with its little paddles on the ice-edge, struggled in vain to get out of the water. When the ill-omened, rising and sinking fins were within a dozen yards, the mother leapt into the water, almost on top of them. I thought she had sprung to certain death; but with one accord the rhythmical fins now moved outwards from the ice, and then I knew that this was only a ruse on the part of the mother to lure the dreadful creatures from her baby. A minute later the cluster of fins turned again towards the ice, and almost simultaneously the mother reappeared, and leapt out of the sea on to the ice again, close to the bleating, struggling baby. Hanging over the ice-edge, and bellowing loudly with fear, she pushed her nose into the little one's face, as though in a last despairing caress; then she seemed to try to pull it out of danger with her teeth. Again the menacing fins approached, and again the mother sprang into the sea, almost into the jaws of death—risking her own life, without a moment's hesitation, to act as a decoy to save her little one. Again the stratagem succeeded, and

the fins turned away once more; meanwhile the terrified baby vainly kept on straining to get out. Soon the mother appeared again. This time, however, instead of leaping on to the ice, she tried to heave the baby out upon her back. The dorsal fins of the Killers turned about again, and I held my breath when, just as the devoted mother had lifted the baby clear of the water, and had it within a single inch of safety, the poor little chap, clawing madly with its flippers, rolled off her shoulders into the sea, and both mother and baby disappeared—not five yards ahead of the nearest of the Killers as they followed their quarry under the ice-sheet.

Neither the whales nor the seals appeared again, and I could only conjecture the tragedy that was probably being enacted under the ice on which the sun was shining so serenely. That was the most inspiring example I have ever known of devotion of an animal mother for her offspring.

Now let me tell you the story of my own adventure with some of these "wolves of the sea". As our expedition ship, the *Terra Nova*, steamed past the coast of Ross Island, many Killer Whales rose and "spouted" as (presumably) they browsed upon the multitudes of penguins that sported in the sea. The next day, soon after we had moored the ship to the sea-ice near where Captain Scott had decided to establish winter quarters, I was about to start off across the frozen sea to the land, which was about two miles away, with a sledge carrying my photographic kit, when eight Killer Whales appeared near the ship, blowing loudly as they headed for a promontory of the ice, under which it was obvious they intended to dive. Hastily estimating where they would probably

reappear, I snatched up my big reflex camera, and ran in that direction. Just as I got to within two yards of the ice-edge, a shock like an earthquake under my feet nearly sent me sprawling, and the ice all about me cracked and broke. This "earthquake" was instantly followed by a booming sound as the enormous black head of a Killer Whale pushed out of the sea a few yards ahead of me, and "spouted". I saw its blow-hole open, and the exhalation of its breath at such close quarters was like a blast from an air-compressor, and I was enveloped in the vapour of the "spout", which had a strong fishy smell. Then seven other great black heads shot out of the sea, and the noise of the swirling water and of their spouting was—well, disconcerting, to say the least!

For a moment or two I hardly knew what had happened, for I was completely bewildered as I staggered on the broken floe on which I was isolated. Fortunately, as the eight whales struck the ice from below with their heads, in order to break it, the shocks had sent me backwards instead of precipitating me into the sea, and I managed to keep from falling into a great crack which appeared in the ice behind me.

As soon as they had cleared the ice the Killers, with devilish cunning, made rapid movements of their great flukes, which caused the surface of the sea to become agitated so violently that the swell which was set up broke the ice for thirty yards around me.

On the ship, which was more than fifty yards away, Captain Scott and a number of my shipmates were watching, expecting every moment, as they told me afterwards, to see me fall into the menacing jaws of the

Killers. Amidst the booming noise made by the brutes as they struck the yard-thick ice with their heads, I could hear frantic shouts from my shipmates: "Run! Jump!—For Heaven's sake, jump!" But I could not jump, as for some moments it was all I could do to keep my feet, with the floe rocking underneath me. Then the monsters turned about and charged at the ice, with the obvious intention of trying to get me into the water. By this time, realizing that my life depended on reaching the firm ice thirty yards away, I had managed to leap across several of the water lanes which separated the broken floes, and the eight whales came crashing through this broken ice, making a horrible noise as they dived under the floes, overturning them behind me. I heard more shouts from the ship, but as I got nearer to the firm ice I found that the broken floes had drifted in the current, leaving a lane of water eight or ten feet wide, which it was impossible to jump. Had I attempted to do so I should have gone into the sea—in which case my Antarctic experiences would have ended somewhat prematurely.

As I stood for a moment wondering what to do, I thought how very unpleasant the first bite would feel, but that it would not matter much about the second. As I hesitated more frenzied shouts came from the ship, exhorting me to jump. But I dared not jump, as the opening was much too wide. Then a lucky thing happened. The commotion made by the whales pushed the floe on which I stood close to the firm ice. I leapt on to it, but not a moment too soon, for as I ran across its rough snow covering I looked back, and a great black and tawny head slid up over the ice-edge, looking

around with little glistening eyes to see what had become of me. The great jaws opened wide, and I saw the terrible teeth I had so narrowly escaped. Then other great black sinister heads shot up through the cracks to the height of seven or eight feet, all showing fearful teeth. But I ran until I was out of further danger. Captain Scott met me. He was deathly pale as he grasped my hand and said, "Thank God you are safe! That was the nearest squeak I ever saw!"

In his account of this incident in his Journal, Captain Scott wrote: "Of course we have known all along that Killer Whales continually skirt the edge of the ice-floes and that they would undoubtedly snap up anyone who was unfortunate enough to fall into the water; but the fact that they could display such deliberate cunning, and that they were able to break ice of such thickness, and that they could act in unison, was a revelation to us."

I believe this is the only instance on record of Killer Whales having made an organized attack on a human being; and I was thankful not to have shared Jonah's experience, as if I had done so I doubt if my adventure would have ended as happily as that of the Prophet.

II

PHOTOGRAPHING SHARKS

by J. E. WILLIAMSON

LET me take you down into the world beneath the sea and escort you into the lair of the man-eaters. Suppose we meet on the deck of my vessel, floating in the crystal-clear waters of the British West Indies; and suppose I say to you: Come with me under the sea, down on the ocean-floor, where we can explore together the wonders of the deep. You will not have to put on a diving-suit to join me in this trip to Davy Jones' locker. You can enter the under-water world through the Williamson Tube, which forms a pathway from the surface down to my comfortable photosphere at its base.

Now we are down near the bottom, thirteen fathoms deep. As long as we keep within the confines of my big steel diving-ball and its thick glass windows, our barrier against the crushing pressure of the water, we are comparatively safe. If all goes well you may soon be looking a bloodthirsty shark right in the eye, and living to tell what you think of him. Close by, outside the big photographic window, you can observe the mysterious floor of the ocean as we move along. To the left is an extraordinary feature of the sea-bottom. It falls away sharply into the blue—to the depth of a mile or more. Dimly outlined some four hundred feet away along the edge of this ocean wall is a forest of coral, the place I have chosen in which to meet the sharks, and we will move in on them slowly.

Don't imagine that the shark is the only creature to be

feared in the sea. There are some beautiful fish which could give me serious trouble. I am referring to the Parrot Fish. There is a school of one hundred or more of them cruising to the right of us, over the sea-gardens—and here comes one of them, dashing frantically towards us, to investigate our strange-looking contrivance. You can see how this fish has earned its name. Notice the sheen of its blue-green body, and its parrot-like beak, full of green teeth, as hard as flint. Those teeth spell trouble. There—see that! The Parrot Fish drives at the glass, cutting a scratch in it with its flinty teeth. Over this white sea-bottom our window mirrors its image. The fish is really fighting itself in a looking-glass. If the whole school should make for us we shall have to pull out of this and move off quickly. Fortunately, our strange visitor leaves us, but we must keep a good look-out! There is danger ahead. A towering mass of coral looms directly in our path. The great glass window will be smashed if I do not act quickly. Do not move: we are all right. I telephone a signal—"On deck! Take up the chamber twelve feet—hold it!"

You see how we leap over the reef. It is easy to handle this portable hole in the sea, as the tube is flexible, and shuts up like a giant accordéon. I sit here at the controls, with some gauges to watch, and am always in touch with my crew above. I am the pilot; I signal up to the surface, giving the course for our vessel, which moves on, carrying the "hole in the sea" along with it.

Now we are clear of the obstruction, and I swing down into the great coral forest—this amazing region of stone trees. We are now in the home of the sharks. Sharks are sea-rovers, to be met with almost anywhere,

so with bait and a little coaxing you can choose your own rendezvous with these ugly creatures. I have baited the trap, and here they come—grey torpedoes, ready for action.

In this pearly-grey light of the sea you can follow their movements. They blend so easily into their surroundings that you can follow them best by watching their shadows, clearly outlined on the white sea-floor. Cautiously they circle near, with eyes as cold as death, and between those eyes is the brain of a cannibal, bent on killing and devouring anything that looks like food, members of its own family included. This is where I come to study the habits of the shark, and I can tell you of a weird experience that came to me in just such a setting.

It was while I was filming Jules Verne's great story, *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. Two divers, armed with heavy rifles, were hunting in this coral forest. They were wearing the type of diving-suit which Jules Verne had described. They were free to explore the sea-bottom, and had no connection whatever with the surface, as they were wearing the chemical diving equipment. Before the divers went down we agreed on a plan of action in case the sharks should attack them. They were to stand back to back, and throw off air-bubbles from their tanks of compressed air—tactics which were generally effective in driving off sharks.

But this time the plan was destined to fail. The scene was in progress. Leaning at an angle against the ocean current, the divers were advancing through the coral grotto. Tropical fish scurried in every direction as they entered the eerie setting directly before me. I was sitting

in the photosphere beside the cameras, with the film humming musically as the magic of cinematography recorded the realization of Jules Verne's dream. Suddenly a great bull-shark circled cautiously around the divers; and they both seemed to realize in an instant that the brute meant business. Along its sides were hunger blotches, and its eyes were protruding. Here was a creature possessed by the urge to kill. The men acted quickly: standing back to back, they threw off a cloud of air-bubbles. Then they stood by with their rifles, one looking one way and one the other, for they could see only out of the small glass window in the front of their diving-helmets. By this time the shark had swept round them again, and retreated into the shadows of the reef—but only for an instant. Then it dashed into action, its dorsal fin upright, and without turning over headed straight for the diver who was facing it. In the next few seconds I witnessed one of the cleverest bits of under water technique that I have ever seen. Instead of losing his head, the diver simply stood his ground. Dropping to a crouching position, he held his rifle low, at an angle, until the shark was within arm's length, and then, as it rushed in with open mouth, he placed the point of his rifle-barrel under the tip of the shark's long snout, raised it with all his strength, and simply heaved the great fish right over his shoulder. The shark was so surprised at the result of this encounter that it gave one frightened look at the men and dashed away. The funny part of the story was yet to follow, for the other diver stood there quivering, waiting for the shark to attack. As he could see only in one direction, he was quite unconscious of what was going on behind him, and it took some telling

to convince him that the battle was over. He never did realize how near he came to getting his head bitten off.

That evening, at sunset, we were celebrating on the deck of our surface vessels, for the day's work had been most successful. Thousands of feet of deep-sea thrills had been recorded by our cameras. In the dark, still water around us the fins of sharks occasionally broke the surface. I decided to catch one, just for the sport of the thing, and called for a shark line. We quickly baited a monstrous hook and threw it into the sea. Within five seconds a big shark had taken it, and the line ran out to its full length of two hundred feet. Then the test came, as it was drawn taut. It was a good-sized rope, as thick as my thumb. Suddenly it slackened, and then the fun began, as I tugged at the line and fought with the man-eater for twenty minutes before it decided to take a rest and let me draw it slowly alongside. It looked like the brute we had disappointed earlier in the day. I got the crew to help me hold the shark, so that one of the black diving boys could reach down with his knife and cut the hook loose, letting the shark go, for I had no further use for it. In an instant we were ready. Crowding close to the very edge of the deck, for the killer was heavy as lead, it took all the strength of myself and of the two men behind me to get the shark's head up out of the water. The cruel eyes watched us with an insane glare, following every move we made. *We* were looking down into the great circular mouth of the man-eater—a terrifying sight, with its rows of saw-like razor-sharp teeth; and now they snapped tightly together as the shark stared upwards in grim defiance. The boy, reaching down with the knife, cut into the flesh to get the hook loose, and just at that

instant, as we were leaning and straining over the edge of the deck, the shark brought its great tail round in a flash and smacked it down on the men behind me. As for me, I suddenly found myself on my way overboard. As the shark wheeled about and dashed off into deep water I landed astride its back. I was gone, and I didn't know where. In the mad confusion the shark rolled over, but I hung on. There were two things of which I thought in those hectic moments. One was that I must keep away from the mouth of the shark, and the other was that I must decide which was the way back to the surface, for in the confusion I had lost my bearings. Then I let go, and striking out madly, with great frog-like strokes, I finally reached the surface. There the sight that met my eyes made me smile even under the circumstances. Above me, flat on their stomachs, six men of my crew were staring down at the water, their eyes popping out of their heads, all anxiously waiting for me to reappear. It had not occurred to one of them to jump in after me—and I do not blame them!

DIVING¹

by THOMAS FERRIS MILNE

I AM thankful to say that diving came quite naturally to me. I have lived safely through thirty years of it in the British Navy. I ran away to sea when I was sixteen. For five years I remained a sailor, but at the back of my head was a plan to become a diver one day.

Those years before the mast helped to prepare me for the years I was to spend on the bottom of the sea, exploring wrecks, recovering treasure, finding the bodies of drowned men, fighting octopuses, and living through other equally strange adventures.

For example, there was the wreck of the *Anglo-India*. Only seven other men and myself survived the tragedy. Soon after we had piled up on the storm-swept, rocky tip of Formosa the skipper and most of the crew were slaughtered by pirates. I was cast up by the sea, and was brought to my senses by a frightful pain in my hand. I opened my eyes to see a naked, coffee-coloured woman with her teeth fastened on to one of my fingers. She was trying to bite it off so that she could get my ring. For the first and only time in my life I gave a woman a hard blow on the jaw.

However, I was rescued from the vicious Formosans by Chinese living on the island, and the officials at Tamsui.

¹ Based on the author's autobiography, *This World and That*, edited by Frank D. Long.

In 1890 I discovered that by joining the Navy as a shipwright I might become eligible to enter the diving class. I jumped at the chance to undergo the tests to discover whether I was mentally and physically equipped to be a diver.

From then until I retired, nearly a quarter of a century later, I dived and travelled, and travelled and dived, week in, week out, year in and year out.

Everything in the submarine world is exaggerated by the loneliness which grips you. Corals and sea-shells are infinitely more fascinating on the bed of the sea than in a museum. And in the silence of the deep, a dead man is a far more awesome sight than on dry land.

It was near the end of my training days when I experienced the first of many terrifying ordeals. I saved my life by accidentally slashing my way out of an entanglement while in a frenzy of terror. I missed my air-pipe with my knife only by a miracle. It happened to be one of the extremely rare occasions when Portsmouth Harbour was a mass of floating ice. Every detail of the dive I made in that ice-strewn water stands out in my memory as if it happened yesterday; I shiver all over again at the recollection.

My job was to recover an anchor which had fouled the mooring chain of Nelson's old flagship, the *Victory*. At that time she was moored close to the entrance to Haslar Creek. Perhaps I should explain that when a vessel is to be moored in one place for a long time two anchors are used—fore and aft—and these are joined on the bottom by a gigantic chain. The anchor of another ship dragging over this chain was bound to be held fast if hooked in a link; held fast, that is, until its own cable snapped.

Then it is a diver's job to release the anchor for hauling to the surface.

This is what had happened. Another ship, caught in the fierce tide, had slipped its moorings, and sweeping across the harbour, her anchor had fouled the *Victory*'s mooring chain. The cable had snapped, leaving her anchorless, and thus incapable of steadyng herself in the powerful tide. I was ordered to recover the lost anchor as rapidly as possible.

I had to wear special kit because of the intense cold. As well as my ordinary under-water clothing I put on two jerseys, two pairs of woollen stockings, a Fearnought belt, an extra-thick woollen cap, and shoulder pads stuffed with horsehair. Over all this I had the twill and india-rubber diving-suit. And still I was cold. At ten fathoms, where the anchor lay, the water felt cold as frozen steel.

The diver's telephone had not then been invented: I could signal only with my life-line. For messages I had a slate. The tide kept the mud on the bottom stirred up and darkened the water, so that at times I could see barely a foot before me. By holding the slate close to my front glass I might have managed to see to write clearly enough for those on board to read, but I doubt whether I could have read a message from them.

I found the *Victory*'s chain with some difficulty, stretching across patches of mud and gravel. Where it lay in mud the huge links were buried, and I had to follow the direction as well as I could until I came to an exposed link.

At last I reached my objective. As was expected, it was hooked into one of the chain links. The weight of

the anchor, added to that of the link, had made a hollow in the harbour bed, but it would be easy enough to release it. All that I needed now was the lifting-tackle. So I signalled for a slate on which to write a message. Presently the slate came down, but the tide must have swept the rope into my lines and entangled it, for the slate stopped short just out of my reach. This put me in a very nasty predicament, as it left me entirely dependent upon the line signals.

By this time the tide was so strong that I was able to keep my balance only by wedging myself against the anchor. With the tide on the ebb, and moving faster all the time, I could do nothing but wait for a lull. Not only was it almost impossible for me to stand without clinging to the anchor, but the mud was being stirred up so much that the water became black as night. I could not see my hand before my face, and a sudden fear set me quaking. My ankles were beginning to ache with the cold, while my head and face were perspiring—partly through my exertions, and partly because I was beginning to feel afraid.

Groping about in the darkness in my frantic efforts to find the slate, I made a startling discovery. My life-line and air-pipe, caught by the swirling tide, had been carried round the stock of the anchor, and I was a prisoner in the freezing water, incapable of signalling for help and blinded by the floating mud.

It took all the courage I could muster to stand still and wait for the tide to slow down and the mud to clear enough for me to see and handle the tangle of line and pipe round the anchor-stock.

My feet stiffened with the cold; my head grew hotter,

and my breath misted the front glass of the helmet. It was sheer torture for mind and body. I knew that everything depended on my keeping my head, so I fought for self-control. It was becoming a sheer nightmare when suddenly, alarmed at my continued inactivity, my attendant tried to signal me on the line. His alarm increased when he got no answer from me. I never received the signals; they were lost in the entanglements round the anchor-stock. Then they decided to haul me up. The result was a sudden tug which tightened all the loops and found me unready. Before I realized what was happening I was tugged off my feet and took a header into the mud under the anchor-stock.

Upside down, my sixteen-pound boots felt a ton weight on each of my aching feet. Breathing became almost impossible. With a flash of intuition, rather than by any process of reasoning, I realized that as long as my life-line formed a bight round the stock of the anchor, pulling from above could only result in my being lashed to the anchor until I suffocated. I was slowly being dragged down to a horrible doom by my would-be rescuers. And then I managed to lose my head completely.

Although I was upside down, I struggled frantically to unsheathe my knife, and then, slashing out wildly, I cut through everything that came in the way of the blade. And miraculously enough, this is what happened: My heavily booted feet caught the air-pipe, thrusting it clear of the anchor *and the knife*, but my life-line was severed, leaving me suspended only by the air-pipe. This left me clear of entanglements, and I was hauled on board by my air-pipe.

I had fainted while fighting for my life with the knife, and I was so near to unconsciousness when I actually slashed through the line that I had no recollection of doing it. That I had done so was discovered when the line was recovered later. My hands were bleeding freely from the cuts I had inflicted on myself in my panicky slashings at the entanglement.

I will recall one other experience of those training days, because it answers a question which has often been put to me: Can the diver sleep while under water? He can, but he will not if he has any sense.

I have only once come across a sleeping diver, and his lapse was due to an overdose of rum. The wood-sawing and hole-boring was child's play to him, and when he found that the rum he had drunk was beginning to take effect he just fastened his line to the anvil (so that he would not be disturbed by signals) and settled down for a nap. This was in forty-two feet of water.

It was because we could not get any answer to our signals that the instructor sent me down to see what had happened. When I saw him I thought he was dead, but he was only sound asleep. We decided to haul up "the body", and in order to lighten the load I opened the inlet-valve to fill the suit with air.

The result was staggering! The "body" sprang to life, resurrected by the sudden inrush of air, grabbed the hammer from the anvil, and gave me a crack on the head. Before he could hit me again he was swung off his feet and was floating upwards. By the time he reached the surface he was wide awake, and his "body" received anything but a cordial welcome from the instructor.

Recovering the bodies of drowned people is nearly always just gruesome, without much light relief.

We were once anchored off Ensenada when one of our men was drowned. The custom was to inform the shore authorities, and the usual reward was offered for the recovery of the body. That did not, of course, excuse me the normal duty of search, and next day I went down to look for him.

The water here was decidedly murky, so I could not see more than a few feet. It took me about an hour to find the dead seaman. I lifted the body and half dragged, half carried it to the shot-rope.

He was a heavy man, and I had my work cut out, but it had to be done, as I wanted to signal for lines to be lowered at that point.

Holding the body firmly between my knees, I sent up the signals and waited. After several minutes a startling thing happened. The body began to move from between my knees! For a second or two I was too surprised to do anything but gape.

It was going from me, slowly but surely, and I was powerless to stop it. I tightened my knee-grip while I reached for the descending lines, but it was no use. Still the body moved forward, and the feet, in passing between my legs, tripped me up.

Down I went with a silly little bump, and there I sat, a mass of queer sensations. I saw the arms swing outwards. Then up and up went the body, disappearing in the dingy waters.

There was I, with the lines in my hands which had been sent down by my attendants, but no body.

Then another odd thing happened. It seemed that the

ghost was after me now, pulling at my right leg. I resisted, but the pull continued. It was high time to investigate, for my foot was lifted off the ground by the unseen force that was tugging at me; a most unsatisfactory situation for any diver on the sea-bed.

I put my hand down to release myself. Imagine my amazement when I discovered a drag-line hook hitched into the seam of my trousers! Like a shot I got my knife out and slashed the line. A two-inch hole had been ripped in the seam, and the water was working its way into my suit. If I could not get to the top before it filled I should arrive in the same condition as my lost comrade. But I was hauled up just in time, and stepped into the boat with my suit full of water up to the shoulders. Another couple of inches, and I should have been swallowing the ocean.

When the water subsided, and I was undressed, the officer in charge of the diving-boat's crew explained what had happened. The people on shore, keen to earn the reward, had sent out a party with drag-lines and hooks, and had arrived on the scene soon after I had gone down. One of their hooks had captured the body and taken it from between my knees; the other captured me, and nearly turned me into the body of a diver!

I have been down in the Persian Gulf when it was like going down into a cauldron of boiling water. I was diving in this part of the world when I lost one of my sixteen-pound boots to a bivalve, that curious mollusc which looks like an elephantine oyster.

I had just finished my job—recovering ship's stores—and was working my way back to the shot-rope, using my distance-line as my guide, as I had moved about a

good deal and had lost my sense of direction. The journey took me through a forest of weeds, many of them reaching far above my head.

It was not easy to see in the darkened water, and I slipped into a hollow surrounded by an insignificant coral reef. Here the growth was decidedly thicker, and I stumbled over what I took to be a rock. I was steadyng myself to prevent a fall when I felt something graze my leg. It was a heavy rub, and a moment later—thud!—the thing had fastened on to my boot.

The water displaced by the closing shell stirred up the mud, and I had to wait before I could get a view of my assailant. Then, to my horror, I saw that I was in the grip of a huge bivalve. I was so startled that I shouted, at the same time tugging with all my might. I might just as well have tugged at the Rock of Gibraltar.

Luckily for me the valve had closed on the brass toecap of my boot. A few inches farther on it would have gripped the soft part of the boot, and I should never have got away. As it was, I had to do some quick thinking. Obviously I could not stay there until the creature chose to open its valve. That might not happen for days. To make matters worse, the water was stifling hot, and my air supply too warm to be healthy.

My telephone was still working and I was able to tell my attendant the plight I was in. I also told him of my plan, which was to take off my boot and then blow myself up to the top. I asked him to be on the look-out for me, as I might not come up anywhere near the shot-rope.

As soon as I got my boot off, the part of my suit round my foot filled with air and blew out like a balloon.

I had the greatest difficulty in controlling my bootless foot, and I certainly could not stand on it. When I pressed it down with my hands it tried to rise behind me and throw me off my balance.

After a lot of trouble I managed to wrap the loose flapping leg round the other. When that was done I closed my outlet-valve, filled my suit to maximum, and blew up to the surface. Luckily I came up really none the worse for the adventure.

One of the strangest jobs which fell to my lot in all my years in the Service was to clean H.M.S. *Philomel* of a shoal of jellyfish which had clogged her main inlet-valve and brought her to a standstill while on important patrol duty in the Persian Gulf. It was two o'clock in the morning. I remember it not so much because of the time as because it very nearly resulted in my electrocution, the death of my attendant, and the loss of the pumping outfit. Those jellyfish had a lot to answer for, besides holding up a cruiser.

We were chasing slave-dhows and gun-runners at the time, and could not afford to wait for daylight. Immediately the *Philomel* got into difficulties with the jellyfish the trouble had to be removed without loss of time. Another feature of the Gulf conditions made swift action essential. At night the sea was flooded with phosphorescence, which glowed brilliantly within a limited radius of the ship. It was a purely surface light, of course, and useless to the diver. It showed up quite plainly the hulls of passing vessels, but once they got outside the glowing circle they were lost in deeper darkness. We had to be fit to keep on the track of our quarry.

That night the temperature was 105° and I could not

sleep. I was lying in my bunk when I was roused for immediate duty. The ship had come to a standstill. It was assumed that we had run into a shoal of jellyfish. The inlet-valve grating was so covered that not an inch of it could be seen through the mass of flabby brown jellyfish.

I went down with an electric lamp. The engineer had contrived an extra grating, and I had to fix this after I had scraped away the fish. For the fixing I took down a collection of tools, fastened to my wrist by a lanyard. My support was a bottom chain, around which my legs were twined. Dangling in this way needs far more physical effort than standing on the sea-bed. It would have been hot work in the Arctic. Here in the tropics it was a boiling job.

The perspiration poured out of me, and a cloudy mist gathered on my front glass, obliterating my view. Before I had finished it was a case of working by touch. I couldn't see either the grating or the supporting chain. Somehow I just managed to finish fixing the additional grating before I reached my last gasp—but only just.

I signalled my return, and my attendant had begun to take in the slack on my air-pipe and life-line, when suddenly my lamp went out. For a second it threw me off my balance, it was so unexpected.

Then came another shock. The lanyard got entangled in my support chain. This was the second time it had done so, but the first time I had been able dimly to see the cord and unravel the tangle. Now I was as good as blind, and to make matters worse, preparations were being made for hauling me on deck. And there I was, a prisoner! My knife! That was my first thought. Quickly I unsheathed it and started hacking at the cord. Then came

the real shock of the night's adventure. There was the sound of a terrific explosion, a bang on the head as though I had been hit with a sledge-hammer, and a fall into heaven knows how many fathoms.

After that—blackness. Then a sensation of soaring aloft on a bed of clouds, and floating in space. I opened my eyes in a world of glittering brightness. How it gleamed and shimmered! I was rising again, but this time I was conscious of the burden of my body. I could feel the pressure of clothes and the weight of my brass-booted feet. I felt a grip under my arms. Someone was lifting me. Then they hauled me inboard. I did not know it, but my life had been saved.

Some hours later I was told what had happened. A defect in the electric cable had put my light out, and just as I was hacking through the lanyard my helmet had come into contact with the cable, giving me an electric shock. I had touched my helmet with my head, which accounted for the "sledge-hammer" blow, and this had made me let go my hold on the support-chain, so that I had fallen several fathoms.

I lost consciousness as I sank, and as I rose again I emerged into the light of the phosphorescent surface-water. In my fall I had jerked over my attendant, who nearly followed me, accompanied by the pump. As luck would have it, prompt hands were on both when they lurched forward. This saved both our lives. It arrested my drop, and willing helpers pulled me to the surface at top speed.

My quickest drop was the few seconds it took me to dive off Dungeness, through twenty-one fathoms of water, to where H.M.S. *Blackwater* lay embedded in the

sand. I got a severe dose of gas poisoning on that job, and was ninety-six minutes rising to the surface.

Under water, of course, it is easy to lift heavy weights. I remember smiling at the surprise of one of my companions, who returned to the surface with a compass strapped to his back. He had ripped it from its bolted bed on the deck of the *Blackwater*. In the water it was hardly any weight for him to handle, but when he tried to clamber over the side of the lighter with his burden six men had to give him a hand.

A diver's dress is, as you may know, designed on protective lines, but there is one place under water where it adds to one's danger. That is in the suction culverts of a dock which is being drained. Millions of gallons of water rush through these tunnels, turning them into horizontal Niagaras. No man could pass through and emerge alive, least of all a diver. Such a culvert is a trap where his equipment would only help to batter him to death.

Next to finding oneself caught in a seething mass of water like this, the most terrifying experience is to be jammed up against the iron bars at the entrance. That is one of the perils to be avoided when repairing a leaking caisson. I can speak feelingly of that too, for I have been through it. Yes, I have had quite a time of it on the sea-bottom, first and last.

IV

“Q” BOAT ADVENTURES

by LIEUTENANT THOMAS HUGHES, D.S.O., R.N.R.

SUPPOSE I try to describe an experience or two of mine while serving as an officer during the Great War. At the outbreak of the war we none of us thought that sailing vessels would be called upon to play such an important part in the sea defence of the country, but “Q” ships, or “mystery ships”, were brought into use to assist in the anti-submarine campaign, and these were mostly Merchant Service vessels commandeered by the Admiralty and specially fitted out. All manner of craft were employed, from fishing boats to tramp steamers. And a fine record they put up! They were manned by volunteer officers and ratings, who underwent a course of secret training—especially in gunnery.

When I had finished my training I was sent on leave, and was home for several weeks. I really thought the Naval Authorities had forgotten me, but one day a telegram arrived which read: “Have you a fore-and-aft or square-rigged certificate?” I knew at once that I should be asked to join one of the windjammers. I replied: “Yes, I hold a square-rigged certificate.” The next day I was told to report to the Commander of my Base, and detailed to join the Q 9 as Navigating Lieutenant. She was of barquentine rig, 210 tons, and was fitted with five guns, all very cleverly concealed. They could be brought into position by a series of gadgets and levers, and the ship’s sides and bulwarks could be

made to drop. The hatches which covered the guns were on rollers, and the guns were fitted with tilting mountings.

Looking down at the ship from the quayside nothing special was observable; she seemed just an ordinary trading schooner. In peace-time her crew consisted of six hands and the skipper, but as a "Q" ship we were thirty-four all told. Officers and crew were all ex-Merchant Service men and Naval Reservists, and a fine crowd of men they were, who, through all our many hardships, and several encounters with the enemy, stuck to the old ship until the finish. Even those who had been injured returned to carry on.

Our vessel was hurriedly fitted out, and it really seemed as though every care had been taken to make her as unseaworthy as possible. We carried no cargo, so ballast was necessary. This consisted of pig-iron and shingle. The guns, which were fitted very close to the cargo hatch-combings, were mounted high, and did not help to steady the vessel. We had no compartments or bulkheads; she was little more than an open shell, so that if she was hit below the water-line it would be a case of "good-bye, ship". We didn't worry as long as we had plenty of ammunition on board and good guns. Every time we fired a broadside rivets fell out, and we were soon leaking like a sieve. On the "Q" ships we had to keep our eyes open, for the enemy were getting wise to their existence, and were taking no chances. We were playing a dangerous game, being really pirates.

We sailed under many different flags—neutral, of course—but before we opened fire on the enemy we always had to hoist the white ensign. During the career of Q 9 we encountered six enemy submarines. One of

her record days was June 20th, 1917, when three submarines appeared, and we sank two. The look-out man reported a submarine three miles away. She came within range and began firing. The fact that not a single round was returned puzzled her, and for a quarter of an hour she withheld her fire. She then started the bombardment again, steering a parallel course to her supposed victim. When she was in a suitable position we opened fire, the first round getting home just abaft the conning tower. It was evidently a mortal wound, for she appeared to lose way and stopped. Seventeen rounds were fired, until seven direct hits had been scored. Not a shell came from the submarine, and the last hit, which holed her just below the fore-deck, caused a very big explosion, throwing a column of water high into the air. The fight was all over within three minutes of the first hit, and the submarine sank.

Later that day another submarine slowly overtook us, opening fire when about two miles off. After the sixth round the Q 9 was stopped, and the small boat put off from her. To all outward appearances our ship was abandoned. The submarine kept up her fire until the boat had pulled clear of the ship. Her subsequent manœuvres puzzled us; for some time she remained stopped exactly abeam, then suddenly she began to approach the ship, and was soon travelling at full surface speed. When six hundred yards distant she began to submerge, and remained submerged until she was within fifty yards of the ship; then she rose rapidly. As the hull appeared our ship downed bulwarks and opened fire with a broadside of four guns. The submarine gave a convulsive lurch, and with a loud gurgling and hissing plunged down

bows foremost, leaving a great pool of oil on the surface. So ended a perfect day!

I had only just returned on board in the small boat containing the panic party when I thought of climbing into the mizzen rigging to have a look round. Imagine my feelings when I sighted yet another submarine near the horizon! "The more the merrier", as the C.O. said—but the ship and crew were looking like derelicts. The last few hours had been a terrible strain, and now all hands were busy clearing away the wreckage and the empty shell-cases that were strewn all over the decks. Our sails were riddled by shrapnel, and had to be renewed.

Well, No. 3 submarine did not come too close. She remained in sight until dusk. All hands stood at their stations through the night, expecting a torpedo from close range during the dark hours. I can tell you we were glad to see the daylight again as we carried on towards our Base, which we reached several days later. After a good spell of leave we returned to the lucky old ship, and resumed our everyday occupation—namely, bluffing. Our crew consisted of English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh, so there was a mixture of good fighting stock.

Although "Q" ship life got rather monotonous at times, the waiting and watching seemed to tell on one's nerves. Our cook, whose peace-time trade was that of plasterer, and who was nicknamed "Ole Bill", made a hobby of breaking up the galley floor and then re-cementing it; so many a time we found cement in our food! We often reprimanded him for his bad cooking, and one day the Commanding Officer asked him if he could make "bubble

and squeak". His reply was, "Sorry, Sir, but I don't know any French dishes!" His cakes were hard as rocks. We cut them into the shape of Victoria Crosses, and wrote on them "For Valour", and he had them strung up on the bulkhead of the galley.

Another quaint character, when asked whether his religion was Church of England or Roman Catholic—I had to fill in a form showing the denomination of the crew—replied that he was neither. I explained to him that he had to be one of the two. "All right," he said, "I'll be a Methodist!" I asked him, what kind of Methodist?—"Oh, Galvanized Methodist!"

I hope I shall not get into trouble if I say what we did when we wanted a little fresh food. On the "Q" ship we were out for fourteen days at a time, and the Naval allowance, and quality, of the fresh meat left much to be desired. We made up for that by creeping inshore after dark at a certain lonely spot on the Cornish coast and returning with a couple of lambs. On arriving on board the question always was, "Where's the mint sauce?" Then a sailor would go ashore and find some mint—and perhaps a sack of potatoes as well!

Our Commanding Officer was one of the coolest of men during an action. Each time I left the "Q" ship with the "panic" party, he used to say: "Good-bye, old chap, see you in Kiel!" But we always turned up again, sometimes after a couple of hours in the small boat; and all this time the submarine was firing at the ship at intervals. In one scrap as many as seventy shells were fired—but the marksmanship, happily, was very poor. To sink us or send us sky-high only one hit was needed near the water-line, or in one of our magazines—which, by the

way, were not protected by armour, but only by one-seventh-inch iron plating. Once a torpedo missed the ship by about ten feet. She certainly led a charmed life, and is still afloat—as a trading schooner plying round the coast of Britain.

Yes, while it lasted it was an exciting life.

V

DELIVERING A YACHT

by COMMANDER J. C. N. MACMILLAN, O.B.E., R.N. (Retired)

IN the early spring of 1932 I was asked to deliver a twelve-metre racing yacht at Marseilles. I accepted, and the venture came up to all my expectations of what one might look for on such a voyage at that time of year.

My first view of her was when she was hauled up high and dry. Such craft are built for racing and not for ocean-going voyages. Thirty-nine feet long, a flush deck, like the top of a billiard-table, and smooth as glass, with nothing between you and the sea three feet below, and an eighty-six-foot racing mast towering aloft. Her displacement was nineteen tons.

The shipyard prepared the yacht for sea, and the small crew I had collected, two men and a doctor friend, joined her on a wet and dismal day towards the end of March. We did not like the look of the racing mast. We felt that here was a bunch of trouble in store, and we were not far out! This mast proved a real nightmare during the whole voyage, and all but ended our careers.

Before we could sail there was a lot to be done in the way of examining gear and sails and battening down skylights and hatchways. The main cockpit had to be battened down with heavy deal planks and covered with canvas, leaving only a small steering cockpit, about three feet square and very shallow. In this very small space we practically lived during our fifteen days at sea. We

loaded stores, mostly tinned, and water to last us seventeen days.

After three days we were satisfied that everything that could be done to ensure the safety of the yacht and crew, even in the worst of weather, had now been done, except for two things. First, the high mast was a distinct danger, and second, the compass had to be placed in an exposed position. Still, there was no help for it; so I decided to take the risk. In the evening of Monday, April 4th, we cast off our moorings, said good-bye to Falmouth, and sailed out of the harbour.

Our hopes were soon shattered. The night was very dark and lowering when our first accident happened. I was steering, when suddenly a big sea hit us: this caused the main trysail to swing inboard, and the sheet swept the top of our compass overboard. This meant that we must either put back for a new top, or carry on with no means of steering at night, except by the stars or the wind on our faces. I consulted my crew, and we decided to go on and make the best of a bad job. So all through the trip night steering was, to say the least of it, unpleasant.

We were anxious as to what the yacht's behaviour would be in a rough sea with the tall racing mast towering above us, and only a very small area of sail, for we had only our storm canvas set. Frankly, I did not like it. We rolled in the beam sea so much that we had to hang on like monkeys; and to make matters worse, there was little to hang on to, with the tops of the rough seas breaking over us. I had an unpleasant feeling of doubt as to our ultimate destination, especially as our course took us away out into the Atlantic, one hundred and

twenty miles west of Ushant, and a good one hundred miles west of the steamer track across the Bay of Biscay.

I had no intention of putting into any port short of Gibraltar, which was about one thousand miles away. We had no wireless, and in case of accident we were unlikely to meet any vessel, as a sailing-ship has to shape a course which is quite different from the steamer route. Anyhow, daylight found us still sailing westwards, and the mast, though straining heavily, still continued to hold. In the meantime, to add to our discomfort, paraffin oil had spilt into the bilges. Its smell, combined with the lack of air below deck, had a disastrous effect on three of us; my doctor friend was the only one who managed to resist this combination. Still, we had to carry on, and as the weather gradually got worse we had no time to think of anything but the safety of our small yacht.

The next two and a half days were one continual fight against odds. The wind had backed to the west, and blew with gale force, with every indication of worse to come. By now we were heading south, and driving across the Bay of Biscay. We lost count of time. Wet through, and lashed together in the tiny cockpit, we were afraid of being swept overboard every minute. We took short spells at the wheel, until our arms were nearly pulled out of their sockets. There was no chance of getting food or hot drinks, as it was almost impossible to stand. Still the mast held, but every man's eye was constantly watching for something which they dreaded would happen. For two and a half days we ran before the Atlantic gale, swept by seas and spray, weary beyond words, but still cheerful as the miles were left behind us,

and we hoped that warmer and finer weather was in front of us.

The scene below was now chaos. Everything movable had changed places. It was pitch dark, for we could not use our only lights—candles in saucers—and the hatchway could not be opened because of the sea. A swinging lamp was describing circles, and the swinging table in the saloon was also moving very rapidly. But everything has to come to an end some time, and the evening of the third day found us eighty miles west of Finisterre. We had sailed some five hundred miles, averaging seven knots, and crossed the Bay of Biscay in record time. We had sighted no ship of any kind.

As the weather had now moderated slightly, we took it in turns to go below, to get our wet clothes off and have some cold food. With great difficulty the swinging Primus was made to produce some hot coffee. The loss of our compass-top had been brought home to us with a vengeance. I cannot adequately describe to you what we went through during the long hours of darkness, with the little ship careering along wildly, the long, high, breaking seas following astern and throwing us about like a wind-tossed cork, while the helmsman steered blindly, with nothing to guide him but instinct. We still had another five hundred miles to go, but the weather was warmer, and, although it was blowing hard, we found that we could snatch a little rest during the daylight hours, but only with our sea-boots and clothing on, and one at a time.

After another anxious and exhausting night, we came in sight of the Burlings, granite rocks off the Portuguese—our first landfall. From the latitude of Lisborn we had

a fine sailing breeze to Gibraltar, having made one thousand and ninety-seven miles in seven days and eight hours. We sailed into Gibraltar Harbour, a weatherbeaten little ship with a weary unshaven and dirty-looking crew, our faces snow-white with a crust of sea salt.

After a day's rest we were ready to go on. To be quite candid, we did not want to move. We had had more than enough. There was still no top to the compass, and our great mast was still a menace. Optimistically, we felt that the Mediterranean could not be worse than what we had been through in the Atlantic—but we were wrong.

Eventually we got away, and all went well until we were abreast of the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the south coast of Spain. We were carrying our usual storm canvas, and sailing along with a fair wind, at a speed of about four and a half knots. About eight o'clock the next morning, without any warning, we ran into a strong wind which came off the mountains, rapidly developing into a fierce gale with a high rough sea. Luckily for us it was a favourable wind, but even so, we found ourselves in an awkward position, with too much sail on the little ship, and driving under instead of over the seas. Our tall mast was bending and whipping like a fishing-rod, threatening to go over the side at any moment. At all costs we had to reduce sail, so one of the crew and I started to tackle the job. As soon as we had lowered the sail far enough to reef it our trouble began; the helmsman had to lash himself to the wheel for safety, as the high following seas were breaking over the stern. It took us an hour, expecting to go overboard every second, but we succeeded in the end, hoisted the pocket-handkerchief of a sail, and away we went like an express train.

Again it was impossible to stay at the wheel for long at a time. For twelve hours the gale blew with terrific force, and then moderated just as quickly as it had begun. While it lasted it was far worse than anything we had encountered so far. The next four days were comparatively peaceful. We kept the Spanish coast in sight, and passed close to Barcelona. Marseilles now seemed quite near, and our spirits rose accordingly. But again we were wrong. At one o'clock the same day we ran into one of the worst thunderstorms I have ever experienced—the fore-runner of our final dusting-down. We had no time to reduce sail, so we had to go on as we were, being driven about for three hours. Again our mast caused us the utmost anxiety, bending and shaking in a most alarming manner. But it did not snap. Every timber of the yacht was straining heavily, and at times the lee side was awash as far up as the companion hatch. She lay nearly flat on the water before we could shake the wind out of her sails. I was full of admiration for the boat's powers of endurance. Eventually the storm passed, and once again we continued our voyage in comparative peace.

Four hours later we passed Cape St. Sebastian. "To-morrow", we thought, "will see the end of our troubles." The weather was fine, with a fair wind, and all seemed well, but it was too good to be true. At ten o'clock the wind began to freshen from the north-west, an ominous sign in the Gulf of Lyons. I was at the wheel, as my crew were below, trying to get a little rest. Reluctantly I called them up to snug down the trysail with a reef. When this was done we felt more secure, and carried on.

By midnight the much dreaded Gulf mistral was on us

with full force. We brought the yacht up to the wind, so as to get her under the lee of the Spanish coast. Then began the worst part of all our voyage. My two men and I crammed ourselves into the tiny cockpit and tried to fight the little ship back to safety under the land. We drove her into a nasty, short, steep head sea, until I thought she would crumple up. The seas were hitting the overhanging bow with reports like gunshot, and spray was flying thirty feet high in the air. In the early hours of the morning the sea seemed to us less steep, and we thought that with daylight we should arrive under the lee of the Spanish coast; but again we were wrong.

We noticed our port and weather main shroud hanging slack—in another moment the mast would be carried away. We could not go about on the other tack in such a sea, so we did the only possible thing. At a real risk we put her before the wind, and gradually brought the wind on the starboard or opposite quarter, to take the strain off the slack stay. We ran before the gale all next day and part of the night. We were driven one hundred and fifty miles out of our course, and all stayed on deck for the next forty hours. For the last forty-eight hours we had had no food or rest, and were forced to exist on small quantities of rum and water.

It is a marvel to me how our small craft survived in that mistral. When the gale was at its height, about mid-day, we had to put another reef in the main trysail, as we were travelling faster than the sea. We naturally did not like the idea, as it meant a great deal of risk both to the yacht and ourselves, but we knew it had to be done. Earlier in the day we had begun to tow bags full of heavy

oil, to break the crests of the following waves, but nothing would have saved us if we had allowed the little ship to be overtaken by those tremendous seas. We gingerly started to lower the sail. In a moment the yacht's speed was reduced, and she took a great sea over the stern. The helmsman was washed away from the wheel like a cork, but we managed to catch him before he was swept away for good. After that the sail was hoisted again, and the helmsman, very much shaken, lashed to the wheel. Our second attempt to reef the sail succeeded, and we carried on, expecting to founder every minute.

We were driving now at great speed towards the Corsican coast. The wind did go down a little, and we managed to bring the yacht round gradually. All night we were edging up, with the sea on our beam and Corsica under our lee. This was a ticklish job, especially as we were so tired that we could not keep awake for even ten minutes at a time while steering.

Anyhow, this night passed like many others, and gradually the weather calmed down. We had two days' food left on board, which included two loaves of mouldy bread, fifteen days old. By noon we were well up to Hyères, and that evening at 7 p.m. we anchored in Hyères Roads, so weary that even the thought of food did not trouble us; we just lay down and slept. Next morning we examined the slack shroud which had caused so much anxiety, and found that it was broken aloft, but, being the underneath shroud, the other had held it jammed in place, which was lucky for us.

Our final destination was now only some twelve hours distant, so we decided to do the best we could with the broken sh**o**ud, and just carry on. We were lucky in

having a fair wind, and arrived at Marseilles the same afternoon. So ended a voyage full of incidents. From Gibraltar we took eight days, and we had covered well over eleven hundred miles. Not a bad record for such a small ship!

VI

WINDJAMMING ROUND THE HORN

by JERRY NUNN

As I am only an old sailor, you must excuse me if my yarn is not in the best of English.

A young fellow who starts a seafaring career to-day can have no idea of the hardships which we old-timers had to go through. I began well over forty years ago. A lad may still have the plucky spirit which many British sailors have inherited since Britain became a maritime nation, but a boy now will never become a seaman, in the sense that we knew then, because the trade can no longer be learned.

A man no longer has to go aloft, and when fisting down a sail, bring every muscle into play and do as the old sailors used to say: “’Old on with yer belly.”

Life on board a sailing ship, or windjammer (as we called them), was an exciting affair, composed mainly of three things: Hunger, hardship and hard work.

In August 1897, I found myself in Australia—how I got there is another story—in company with several other men. I was shipped from a boarding-house kept by a widow in Hunter Street, Newcastle, N.S.W. The boarding-house runner shoved us on board a three-mast barque called the *Firth of Tay*. We could not even tell her colour because of the amount of rust and coal-dust which covered her after loading coal under the tips, but before we left her she was like a yacht, with a light lead-coloured hull and black bulwarks.

She had been towed out into the stream ready for sailing when I was signed on in the saloon by the "Old Man".

The skipper did not read out the articles of agreement in the usual way; all he said was: "Well, we're bound for a God-damn place called Chanaral on the West Coast of South America, or any place between the latitude of 70° north and 70° south. Will ye go?"

I said "Yes", and he said, "Sign here", and made out an advance note for the large sum of £3 10s., this being my first month's wages. This I had to endorse on the back, and it was at once claimed by the boarding-house runner, to pay for three days' board and lodging, a bag with a few old rags in it, and bedding consisting of a "donkey's breakfast" (a straw mattress) and a couple of old horse rugs.

I dumped my gear in a coffin-like bunk in the fo'c'sle, and could not help noticing that there was not even a table or seat in the place, which meant that we had to eat on the floor. Well, I went on deck, and was at once sent aloft to cross the fore-Royal yard.

The Royal yards had been struck down, as the ship had done her last passage in ballast, and this was the usual procedure.

When I got aloft and saw the state of her gear, I reckoned we should be lucky if we did not lose something on our voyage.

Her yards were fitted with iron parrels or clamps, to allow them to ride up and down the pole of the mast, and these were supposed to be lined with leather. This leather was all worn through, and where the edge of the parrel had chewed into the mast it had made a great

notch. What was the result? Instead of a neat fit, there was plenty of loose play. This meant that when the ship rolled, if a man was on the yard working, he had all he could do to keep himself from being jerked off and hurled down on to the deck, about a hundred feet below him.

Next day we sailed, after having been towed clear of the land, and our first misfortune soon overtook us.

We struck a fine breeze, with the result that the ship heeled well over, and this made the cargo of coal settle down into place, and the coal that had been on the weather side of 'tween decks fell to the lee side of the lower hold. This gave the old ship a continual list, and all hands had to be employed with shovels, to pass the coal down into the vacant spaces below. Stripped to the waist, with every pore exuding sweat, we worked with a will for some days, knowing that our safety depended on our own efforts. There were no warm baths to be had after we finished each shift, but just a sluice down with salt water, and a couple of hours' sleep before we started again.

Eventually the ship was made safe again, and things were going smoothly before we crossed the 180th meridian, where the "Old Man" deprived us of a day's rest and a day's pay by saying: "To-day is no day, to-morrow will be Monday", and so giving us two Mondays in one week, instead of two Sundays. This was because we were sailing east, and being half-way round the world, were twelve hours ahead of Greenwich time. As the ship continued eastwards, the clocks would have to be put on for another twelve hours by the time England was reached, so, to get over this, twenty-four hours are dropped in one lump.

We were, all told, a ragged, happy lot. We spent our dog-watches trying to put a patch on one piece of clothing with a scrap cut from wherever we could find it, no matter what the colour or pattern. One of the men had an accordion, and we used to sit on the fore hatch, singing some of the old-time songs we knew. We had not a single book or sheet of newspaper to pass the time with, and even if we had had one we could not have read in the fo'c'sle, as we only had a colza-oil globe-lamp which was lit only while the watches were being changed, and then at once put out, "by orders".

We had three small pigs on deck in a pen, and two coops of fowls, supposed to be for use later on, as fresh food for the Captain, but they suffered a different fate. While running the Easting down we met rough weather, with the result that the fowls were washed overboard and the pigs were drowned.

Imagine a pitch-black night, and someone banging on the fo'c'sle door, shouting "All hands on deck to get the mainsail in!" That is the shout that used to wake up men who had been dreaming between half-wet blankets. We turned out to find the fo'c'sle flooded, and everything that was not hung up was washing to and fro. We emptied out our sea-boots, and getting into oilskins, tied ourselves up with "soul and body lashings" round neck, waist, cuffs and legs, and then waited our chance to rush out on deck; but just as we emerged a big green sea would come right over the fo'c'sle head and on top of us. We were now wet through before starting, but struggled aft, to find that the watch on deck had already got the upper sails in, and clewed up the mainsail.

"Lay aloft, men!" came the order, and all hands,

including the first and second mates, made their way up to the weather side of the main yard. The sail would be thrashing and stretching out as straight as a deck in front of us with the force of the wind as we tried to get a grip of it. Then, cursing, swearing, and tearing our nails and fingers on the hard wet canvas, we put forth all our strength. I am a short man, a thing I always found a nuisance, for if there was a six-footer alongside of me I could not always keep my feet on the footrope, and was merely balanced on my stomach across the yard; but in the end we managed to master the sail and get the gaskets passed in some sort of a furl. But then the job was only half finished, as we had to get over to the other yard-arm, and go through the whole business again. This was rather easier, as on the lee side there is less wind in the sail. But everything comes to an end some time, and when the sail was furled we returned to the deck, to find that it was now our turn for the watch on deck, and so we had to remain in our miserable, wet condition for about three hours more before we could be relieved. On this passage the old skipper was fairly good, and let us go down in turn to the saloon alleyway, where his wife was serving out a tot of rum to each man in a medicine-glass. She too had been fortifying herself, for when we helped her to keep her feet she blamed her goloshes for being so slippery.

When the gale blew itself out, sail was made again, and the usual work of the ship, such as chipping, scraping, cleaning varnish off teakwood doors and houses, and all such-like routine, was carried out.

Lumps of hard canvas, and ashes from the galley, with salt water, was what we used to get all the doors and

hatchways clean with, ready for revarnishing on the homeward passage. At the end of a fifty-six-day passage we made our landfall, only to be becalmed, but we were near enough for the "Old Man" to decide to kedge our way into the roadstead.

On board our windjammer we were supposed to carry four boats—two lifeboats stowed on skids over the deckhouse, and a gig and dinghy aft. In practice we only had one boat fit for use, since the lifeboats had been used as stores for so long that their backs were broken, they having been stowed upright, and the gig had been washed away on the previous passage. The carpenter had built a boat of junglewood to replace it, but being unable to bend the planks properly, she had turned out such an odd shape that she was useless and cranky unless filled with ballast, and was then too deep in the water. Well, there was no help for it but to use the dinghy, so after bending two Manila ropes together, with one end made fast to the kedge anchor, this was rowed ahead as far as the ropes would allow, and then dropped. We then tailed on to the rope, and to the tune of "We'll hang the old cook on the fore top-gallant yard", we hove the ship up to it. This was done several times, until we reached our berth, and dropped our anchor in Chanaral roadstead.

Next came the job of rigging yard-arm tackles and dolly winch, for a spell of navvying coal into thirty-ton lighters, destined for the smelting works ashore. This was done by four men on the winch and four in the hold, day and day about, alternately. The "Old Man" and his wife now made good use of their best shoregoing clothes, and, incidentally, the whole of our crowd was given a

day's leave, but we caused such a commotion ashore that we were never allowed to land there again.

During our stay in South America a bit of an argument started between one of the men and the mate. I was working in the hold, filling my basket, when we heard a row, and, naturally, we downed tools to see what was going on. The mate already had a black eye, but had got his opponent wedged against the main rigging, and the Captain was running towards them with a belaying pin. The skipper's wife was on the poop in an old dressing-gown, having brought up his revolver, and was screaming : "Shoot him, Tom, shoot him!" So the crew stepped in and intervened, to get the man for'ard out of the way, and I took the line of least resistance by diving overboard ; out of sight out of trouble!

Before our coal was all out we had to take in sand ballast, and eventually we sailed three hundred miles north to load saltpetre. This was done in a hurry, to get us away by a certain date, which meant that we had to leave after dark, with cargo still on our decks yet to be stowed.

We were now bound round the Horn to Falmouth for orders, and as luck would have it our fresh-water tank leaked, so we had only our biscuit and flour tanks to carry water in, to last us a passage which might take six months. A cheerful prospect!

We had fine weather till we got down to "Stand by" latitudes, the "Roaring forties" ; but we had the dreariest Christmas Day I have ever known. Not even a bit of duff pudding, let alone a drink. Off the Horn we ran into the usual terrific hailstorms, with stones as big as large walnuts, and with them the biggest seas I have

ever seen. It was my first experience of Cape Stiff weather. Sometimes, as I stood at the wheel, I thought the sea would come right over me, and then, the next minute, we would be on the crest of a mighty wave, and could see for miles round.

The passage was the same as any other, rough and fine weather alternately, with a spell in the doldrums, when we were kept hard at work bracing the yards to catch any puff of wind which would move us a fathom or two.

Some of our provisions went bad; we ran out of salt meat and flour, and were living on Boston beans and tinned meat till we fell in with an outward-bound Dutchman, who "hove to" and let us have some salt beef and biscuits. This was somewhere near the line in the Atlantic.

We were on such a short allowance of water, too, that we were glad to catch any rain that fell, to fill some spare casks we had.

Just after passing the Western Islands we were caught in a real hurricane, which hove us to for a whole week, with oil-bags hanging all round us, and only the rag of the mizzen staysail set to steady her. We reached Falmouth after one hundred and sixteen days at sea, and I think we were No. 56 of the sailing-ships to anchor in the harbour. Even so, others followed, many towed in with spars gone, or otherwise disabled in the hurricane we had been through.

Even then our voyage was not over, as after spending a week in Falmouth, during which the "Old Man" allowed a tailor on board, carefully letting him know the amount of money due to each of us, we got orders to make for Ghent in Belgium, to discharge and pay off. We took

another twelve days on the passage to Flushing. Tugboats kept on offering to tow us, but the "Old Man" would not take one. We eventually made the River Scheldt, and being there taken in tow, proceeded up the canal to our final destination, arriving on a Saturday. This made us spend a week-end in Ghent or Antwerp, as we could not pay off till Monday.

Antwerp was a real sailor town in those days, and it was always "Get up, Jack, make way for John the home-ward bounder", so of course we could get all we wanted —which, incidentally, jolly well had to be paid for at the Consul's Office when we "paid off".

I need hardly say that several of the men got knocked on the head and shanghaied on to another ship, once more "outward bound", working out a "dead horse" of a month's advance pay.

Still it was a grand life, a sailor's; I could not ask for a better.

VII

BAY OF BISCAY

by CECIL MADDEN

My story is only a very short one. Even now I can picture vividly a scene which at the time meant little to me, but to those round me meant the equivalent of "S O S". I will try to re-create this picture in a few words.

I was about eleven years old at the time. I was travelling alone from a Spanish port, where my parents were living, and was bound for Wales, on my way back to school in England.

The scene was the Bay of Biscay. Actually the very middle of this famous bay. We were in the centre of a positively terrific storm. The seas were mountains high, and the wind had lashed them into a fury.

The steamer was under a Continental flag—a cross between a liner and a cargo tramp. I was not the only passenger, but with the exception of a dejected commercial traveller the saloon was mine.

To a grown man the cabin bunks would have seemed long; to me they were nothing more nor less than a menace. The mattress was not quite as long as the bunk, which was beautifully made of highly polished wood, so that with every roll the mattress changed its position by some three inches, rendering rest an impossibility. What happened when the steamer pitched and turned is, as the Americans say, "nobody's business", for the bunks were placed sideways-on, an old custom long since

discarded. In this storm the boat had a kick like a horse.

Every few minutes during the early part of the night I was projected on to the floor, until I decided to lie there, in a welter of clothes, bedding, boots, shoes and other movables. This I did until one of my particularly heavy suitcases fell on me from a height of seven feet, almost dislocating my jaw. If it had registered a surer hit I should not be here to tell my tale.

Something else decided me to move off the floor almost simultaneously with the mishap with my luggage: an ominous trickle of water, which seemed unusually salt, entered the cabin under the bottom of the door. The water slowly explored the farthest nooks and crannies of the cabin, and, less slowly, increased in volume.

I gradually realized that the water was coming in very freely. I wrestled with the cabin door, but the pressure already made this difficult. I got it open at last, and was at once knocked down by the rush of water in the passage.

A steward tried to help me as I was trying to help myself. The two of us got me out. The cabin door shut with a bang, obviously for ever.

I was in my pyjamas, with little chance of changing them for anything heavier. A man snatched up a pile of tablecloths; they all fell into the water except two, one of white linen, the other of green baize, in private life a kind of backing to the polished surface of the saloon table. I seized this, tore two holes in it for my arms, and wrapped it round me coat-wise.

We were now in the saloon, and the water was up to my waist. The swivel chairs attached to the floor were

grotesquely swivelling to and from each other for the last time as the water damped their enthusiasm and impeded the movement of their legs.

The wind howled, the syren blew low melancholy blasts, obviously feeling the fruitlessness of the effort. The sluggish stream swirled up and over the tables. I was stood on a table, and gripped it hard in the rolling pandemonium. The racket was not caused by human beings, but by falling crockery, falling luggage, falling fittings, falling everything. It seemed a great waste, but I was too excited to be conscious of such inessentials. Then the lights suddenly went out.

The bridge was already smashed to matchwood. Such steering as there was possible was effected with the emergency gear. A crate of fowls had hours since cackled high in the air on the crest of a wave, to be heard and seen no more. A door leading to a flight of stairs that ran up to the deck swung back with the pressure from the seas smashing against it.

A hoarse shouting followed. A strong arm seized me round the waist. I was thrown head foremost into a boatful of men with oars. It was my first experience of a night at sea in an open boat.

VIII

THE VOYAGE OF THE *TAI-MO-SHAN*

by LT.-COMMANDER MARTYN SHERWOOD, R.N. (Retired)

IN 1932, when I was serving in the *Hermes*, an aircraft carrier, then at Hongkong, I was approached by four other Naval officers, who asked me to join them in a somewhat unusual method of returning home at the finish of a foreign commission. I readily accepted. We made our plans, and put them into execution as soon as we received the Admiralty's approval for our project. So it was that our vessel, a ketch-rigged yacht of twenty-two tons, forty-five feet in length and twelve feet beam, was nearing completion by early in May 1933.

During this interval the five of us had not been idle. While one member of the crew was learning how to operate the wireless set, another was collecting the stores necessary for the proposed voyage from Hongkong across the Pacific and Atlantic oceans to England. We even took cooking lessons at one of the leading hotels in Hongkong, as the thought of subsisting on a diet of hard-boiled eggs for long periods was somewhat depressing.

The Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Company worked overtime. The boat hummed with activity, which the extreme heat then prevalent at Hongkong made almost unbearable. A Chinese carpenter would be fitting up a cupboard; an electrician wiring the lights; a joiner trying to make the bilge-pump work; one of the crew would be stowing away the innumerable tins of

meat, while another was testing out the wireless; and just to add the final link to the chain of confusion, someone else would be spraying fresh water over the rest of us in his earnest endeavours to fill the tanks.

The climax was reached when the cook came down with the chef of the hotel to try out his newly acquired art on the Primus stoves.

It was a welcome relief when we set sail on the thirty-first of May. No sooner were we clear of the harbour than we experienced sufficiently rough weather to make at least one of us wish that we had never embarked upon the venture. I can assure those who deplore their inability to enjoy the antics of the ocean that despite a Naval training I have always suffered from severe seasickness. But on this voyage I discovered, quite definitely, that after thirty-six hours of rough weather all symptoms disappear, and one attacks one's food with immense energy.

We were a little anxious lest the pirates should attempt to capture us for purposes of ransom as we sailed past their famous lair in Bias Bay. However, we had provided ourselves with a harpoon gun, and to this day we rather regret that we were not given the opportunity of capturing them one by one in so novel a fashion.

Our first port of call was to be Keelung in the northern portion of Formosa, a Japanese island. This comparatively small stretch of five hundred and forty-five miles took us five days, and it was during the twenty-four hours preceding our arrival that we covered a distance of one hundred and ninety-six miles, which was to be our longest daily run on the Pacific.

I will not attempt to furnish you with details of our

movements ashore; but I can recall some exceedingly pretty little Japanese girls who served us with saké, the native drink.

Our next leg was to Yokohama, another one thousand one hundred and forty-four miles. It was here that we received a letter in Japanese, which, when translated, read as follows:

"SIR,

"It is owing to the report of to-day's paper that I take the liberty of writing and expressing to you the great admiration I have felt as to your fine undertaking that you have tried to sail fifteen thousand miles in such a small yacht, as only twenty-two tons. The paper reports that your boat has shown her light-green body waving the Union Jack and appearing on deck your brave and noble figure only having on simple white shirts and shorts off the coast of Yokahama. What a boldness you have done indeed. What a pride of your Navy, which had ever so famous Admiral Nelson. Great British will be crown of powers. Good luck to our friend British and my dear and honourable you and attendants."

We stopped once more, this time at Nemuro in Northern Japan, where we took on board fresh provisions before sailing up into more northern latitudes. It was a long weary trip from the north of Japan up to Attu, the westernmost of the Aleutians, that chain of islands which runs across the Northern Pacific and forms the southern boundary of the Bering Sea.

Before we had completed these fourteen hundred miles, we experienced a southerly typhoon which compelled us to heave to for twenty-four hours. The enormous seas which it created filled us with considerable apprehension, but before long we realized that *Tai-Mo-Shan*, as our vessel was called, was safer than the largest

liner. *Tai-Mo-Shan* is the name of a mountain in Hong-kong, and its literal translation would be "High Hat Hill".

The weather is nearly always foggy in these parts, and our daily runs were getting shorter. Our best day's runs were achieved soon after leaving Bermuda for Dartmouth; the record was two hundred and eight miles, though I think on one occasion during the voyage we did *minus* two miles in the twenty-four hours!—Attu was a small island with only forty-nine inhabitants, though a new arrival brought the number up to fifty during our stay. They told us she was to be named *Tai-Mo-Shan*.

The natives trap foxes on this and the neighbouring islands for an American who sells the pelts in the London market. The rivers were swarming with salmon, but the natives preferred the tinned variety from the store which the American had stocked for their benefit.

So fierce were the tide-rips and so persistent the fog around these islands that wrecks were numerous. We accordingly decided, when we left on the tenth of August, to follow a course well to the northward, across the Bering Sea, which was then free of ice.

When we were nearing Unalaska at the eastern end of our run, we began to have misgivings, for owing to the fog we had not been able to fix our position since leaving Attu. Something had to be done about it, as we had no idea how far the tide had set us toward the islands, and the visibility was nil.

Friendly fur-seals popped their heads up at intervals, wondering who it could be disturbing the calm of these waters. Our wireless operator fixed up a rough direction-finding coil, and by means of this and a hand-compass we

set a course for Dutch Harbour. Luckily it proved to be sufficiently accurate. We would willingly have stayed here for some time, but we had now completed only four thousand four hundred and eighty miles, and as we had some sixteen thousand miles to do in all, we put to sea again on the twenty-third of August, bound for Victoria in British Columbia, a distance of seventeen hundred miles.

The winds were still light, and though this distance took us twenty days, and we were becalmed for three days off the entrance to the Straits of Juan de Fuca, which lead up to Vancouver, we were still on friendly terms with one another.

It was on occasions like this that we should have liked to have an engine of some sort, instead of being at the mercy of the tide. However, we reached Vancouver eventually, though we narrowly escaped being rammed by a large ocean liner whose lights towered above us in the fog. The hospitality here, as at all the other ports which we visited, was so excellent that, as usual, we had to put to sea again to recuperate.

We ran little chance of scurvy, as we varied our tinned food with the addition of potatoes, onions, etc., of which we always carried a few sacks. They keep almost indefinitely, and the same is true of eggs, provided you grease them when fresh. Even bread can be kept a fortnight, but by then one is getting to the stage of removing the mould with a knife before putting the loaf on the table. As washing does not assume the importance at sea that it does ashore, we never ran short of fresh water. Half a gallon a day is ample for anybody, for all purposes.

From Victoria we made our way to Panama, visiting San Francisco, Los Angeles, Mexico City and Salvador *en route*. Having no engine, we were not looking forward to the calms which prevail as one approaches Panama. The total distance which we sailed down the west coast of America, between Victoria and Balboa at the Pacific end of the canal, was a little over four thousand miles, which took us altogether sixty days. It might be noted that we visited Hollywood during this period, and whenever we tried to get away it seemed that one or other of the crew had got a date. Still, no one was left behind.

I well remember when we came across our first turtles. We steered alongside them, making as little noise as possible. Before the sleeping reptiles were aware of it we had turned them over on their backs. They solved the fresh meat problem more than once.

We also harpooned a porpoise, which was not at all an easy catch to hoist on board. Porpoise liver is excellent eating, and it was lucky that we had a Naval surgeon on board, who could locate this part of its anatomy for us.

We wished we could have reached Balboa, at the Pacific end of the canal, by Christmas Day, but owing to adverse winds and currents we were still well out at sea. A ship which passed us, heading northwards, signalled to us: "It is a pity you cannot come on board; we have turkey with trimmings." As we had got down to corned beef and biscuits we agreed that it certainly was a pity.

We were given a tow through the canal, and were entertained by the American Navy at Coco Solo at the Atlantic end of the canal, and by H.M.S. *Danae* when we got to Jamaica. We then proceeded to do some surveying

in the Bahamas. We were anchored for this purpose in a small bay off Crooked Island when a sudden and violent gale sprang up and drove us ashore. There was a settlement here of about one hundred natives, who helped us to haul the vessel high and dry, to wait until the storm abated. It took us a fortnight to get her off. The island, which had recently been swept by severe hurricanes, could not provide us with timbers large enough to improvise rollers. The natives had one shovel, and even this, they explained, could not be used in salt water, as it was employed only for burying the dead!

We got her off again at last, and what little damage she had suffered was repaired at Nassau.

These islands are inhabited by natives who were originally transported from West Africa by the British; so it was interesting to hear Captain Collie of the local schooner, *Louise*, tell us this story as he sat round our camp fire, when we were celebrating the fact that *Tai-Mo-Shan* was afloat once more in her native element. His great-grandfather, he told us, lived in West Africa, and the British discovered that he was very fond of pea-nuts. They laid a trail of them, and "grandpa" found them much to his liking. One day he came to the end of the trail, and there he found some Britishers, holding out a bag of pea-nuts. Captain Collie explained that his great-grandfather, not knowing how to use his hands, popped his woolly head into the bag to obtain what he wanted. No sooner had he done so than a string was pulled tightly around his neck. They took him by ship to Crooked Island, where they released him and told him that he was to start a new life, and that in future his name was Adam Collie. That, the Captain explained, is how

his family got their name and came to live on Crooked Island!

From Nassau we made our way to Bermuda. Our Atlantic crossing was a non-stop run from here to Dartmouth. It took us twenty-nine days, and completed a voyage of sixteen thousand miles in one day under a year.

I should have liked to tell you about the sea-serpent, but that is a story in itself.

IX

SHAKING HANDS WITH A HURRICANE

by "SINBAD"

HURRICANE is a misused word which few who have not lived or travelled in hurricane regions are really able to understand properly. A great storm need not be a hurricane. The wind may blow at a terrific number of miles per hour, and still fail to reach hurricane force or whimsicality.

A hurricane is a revolving storm, which means that in it the direction of the wind continually changes, and thus makes it almost impossible to estimate the amount of stress it will exert at any given moment. After blowing for half an hour from one direction, perhaps at a hundred miles an hour, it will suddenly shift several points and blow as hard from the new direction; everything in its path will be abruptly called upon to give up opposition to the stress, and apply a new opposition to a new assault.

The hurricane of which I speak reached a force of one hundred and twenty miles an hour, recorded on the anemometer of the nearest lighthouse five miles away; then the anemometer blew away, and within an hour the lighthouse itself was scattered all over the island on which it had stood, and the lantern was blown into the sea.

That's a hurricane, that was! It swept over a part of the Bahamas in August of 1928, and I shook hands with it in passing.

My vessel was anchored in a tiny landlocked harbour

in Royal Island, where I was working hard to get some writing done before starting to sail home to England. I had not seen England for nearly twenty years. I was full of eagerness. The work was going well, the little schooner was securely moored, the island lovely, peaceful and remote from all interruption.

Our nearest neighbours were the lighthouse keeper and his family on Egg Island; on Royal Island nobody lived at all. Wild sugar-cane grew there, a few bananas, and even a stray pineapple vine here and there, survivor of a period when people really tried to cultivate the little island.

Now I knew that our island was in the hurricane region, and that the hurricane season was at hand; but we lay in a calm harbour which was completely surrounded by high land, the water was nowhere very deep, and the entrance only just wide enough to admit us. We had put down three anchors, with all the cable we had, and believed that even a hurricane would leave us unharmed.

When the barometer started to fall, on a perfectly brilliant day without wind, I recognized the signs and inspected the moorings; but I had no uneasiness. I did not believe that any wind that ever blew could raise enough turmoil inside that haven to do more than make us uncomfortable.

But it could, and it did. The little schooner was only fifty feet long—a tiny thing really—but she was stout and seaworthy; she had weathered many a brutal gale in the deep water of the open ocean. I felt secure, even when, two hours after the first barometer warning, the blue sky was veiled behind a haze, and little clouds sped before a

wind which had not yet reached our island. The sea in our harbour lay smooth and smiling; the trees had not begun to whisper. They were to moan very soon, and later on roar and crash and fly across the harbour like unnameable things of night.

It is queer how many really nasty things happen after dark. Until the sun set that evening there was only a strong wind blowing—the barometer had fallen ominously, but still no disturbance reached our harbour. The sky at sunset, however, was like a smoky fire; ugly, evil, shivery. It was when complete darkness came that the real storm burst.

A squall of rain pelted down without warning—a hard, tremendous discharge—and its passing was followed by a blast of wind which sent a wall of white water hissing down the harbour. The schooner surged back on her anchors, and the chains grunted and sent out sparks as they ground hard against the hawse-pipes.

We knew there was a hurricane blowing when our harbour hummed like a vast machine with the wind coming in through the narrow entrance; when a tree flew across our mastheads from one side of the harbour to the other; when a white ghost of spray suddenly shot up above the highest point of the windward hills and flattened into a sheet of water which hit the schooner like a solid blow.

The barometer had fallen to 28.80 inches, and was still falling. By midnight it had become necessary to refasten all sails and gear on deck. Sheltered though we were, our small boat, which was lying keel upwards, was lifted and blown along the deck. But still our three anchors held on stoutly—until three o'clock in the morning, that awful,

shuddery hour when the blood feels diluted and the darkness is almost tangible.

It was just about three when, watching anxiously for any sign of good or ill, I saw the familiar shape of the hill-crests begin to move. The eternal hills were not moving—it was we. Crawling forward, fearfully, I looked at the cables. They stretched out ahead like bars of iron. They twanged. They were rigid. But suddenly they jumped. The anchors were dragging.

By this time our harbour was a furious welter of broken sea. Never again will I look upon the securest of harbours as secure in hurricane countries. The hills were moving faster now. There was nothing to be done. Nothing but hang on and hope—for astern of us, at the end of the harbour, was a ragged reef on which we could hear the sea thundering. Anybody flung into that murderous tumult might expect to be stripped of flesh in sixty seconds.

Shortly afterwards the schooner struck the ground. She was still two hundred yards from that reef astern, but once she hit the ground she moved fast. That is something I have never understood, but it is a fact that the schooner moved a great distance bumping along the bottom, dragging her three anchors with her.

Then, the water shoaling, she heeled over, and the sea began to sweep over her. First the small boat burst its lashings and flew overboard; one rope held on for awhile, and the boat was picked up by the wind, and flapped upon the water until it broke into pieces. By this time we could see the reef. It seemed that the end had come. A lifebuoy was torn away; the chemical flare attached to it burst into flame, and fell upon our spare petrol tank on deck.

That was a breathless moment. I crawled towards it with a knife. Perhaps nothing would have happened, but fire and petrol—a hundred gallons of it! It was uncomfortable to think what might happen. The flare was cut away and hurled into the sea, and that danger was over.

Then the wind suddenly fell away. I knew enough to be wary of that. The barometer had ceased to fall. Stars could be seen. It was almost a dead calm; but I knew my hurricanes from long experience at sea. I seized the chance to unroll a sail and stow it handy in a sheltered spot, hoping that it might prove a buffer if the wind should come again, as I feared it would.

And it did! In twenty minutes it blew harder than ever from exactly the opposite direction; and now the schooner started to bump over the bottom towards another bit of the shore. The deadly reef was no longer to be feared, but there were ragged rocks wherever we might finally pile up. Now it was impossible to remain on deck. The sea poured over us. We went below to wait for the last great smash of all.

A water-tank broke through a bulkhead and almost flattened us; a ton of coal came clattering out of its bunker and smothered us. The cabin was half full of water, the little ship lay over on her side, and every minute we were flung from the floor by the crashing of her keel and side upon the ground.

My companion said, calmly: "You're sure we can do nothing else?" I shook my head. A handshake, and we crouched in expectation of the end.

It was almost daylight when the crash came. The schooner hit something so hard that she almost stood upright—and we clambered on deck to see what chance

we might have. The seas were rolling over us. But right before our eyes the island stood up like a wall. We crawled forward.

The schooner was lying with her bows in the jungle. That final crash had hurled her half out of the water into the bush; her bowsprit was broken off, and lay like a slender bridge to a great split rock. Over that uncertain bridge we crawled ashore to safety, nearly naked, bruised, having lost our all, but still alive.

I mentioned the word whimsicality with regard to hurricanes. The word is apt. In less than an hour after we found a cranny to shelter us, the hurricane had passed. A new day dawned with smiling sunshine. Only the wreck and the devastated island reminded us that there had been a big wind.

For three days we lived on wild fruits scattered by the storm. At the end of those three days the people from the destroyed lighthouse on Egg Island, seeking help for themselves, found us.

For a week or so we helped them; many a shipmaster must have wondered at the poorness of the light on the dangerous Egg Island reef during those days; it was the best we could give them, for until a new light was set up I lit and hung in a tree an old ship's lantern, and that was all the light that showed.

It was poor enough; but the only wreck that occurred, so far as I know, was the complete destruction of my little schooner, *Gauntlet*, and with it everything I owned in the world, except my life.

THE EXPLORER

X

HAZARDS OF EXPLORING

by MARTIN LINDSAY

Gold Medallist, French and Belgian Geographical Society

THE explorer is traditionally a romantic character, like a lighthouse-keeper or a matador. He faces considerable dangers in search of an ideal, and has tremendous adventures: indeed, the bigger the adventure the better the explorer! That is the popular fancy. But it is false.

We have often in the past been thrilled by the stirring accounts of the explorers of old, who suffered appalling privations to gain the knowledge that has made things so much easier for modern expeditions. Almost all their suffering came from ignorance. They had their adventures all right, but thanks to their efforts and the experience they gained exploration is now more or less a "soft option". Adventures should no longer occur, for an adventure on a modern expedition is almost always a sign of incompetency, showing that something has gone wrong.

The most hazardous adventures in my career have all been due to blunders. In 1929, accompanied by about a dozen native carriers, I trekked through the dense tropical jungle of Central Africa.

Swahili is the *lingua franca* from the East Coast of Africa to as far west as Stanleyville, and I had to learn it in order to talk to my personnel. Each morning, grammar in hand, I pressed forward through their stuffy humanity-laden atmosphere, and having got well ahead,

made voyages of discovery into the mysteries of the language.

One day this habit got me into serious trouble. Not noticing where I was going, I strayed for some time along an old elephant path, and found myself lost. I could not retrace my steps, since a surface of rotting vegetation leaves no spoor. I decided to search northwards for the track, and had literally to force a way through the under-growth, pulling myself up the steepest slopes and scrambling down the other side. Eventually I came to a river flowing roughly east to west, and it seemed probable that this was the same one that ran past the village we had left that morning. I followed the course until dark, and as the jungle on each bank was almost impenetrable, I walked in the middle of the river, following all its little whims and fancies as it continually twisted and turned. It was impossible to make rapid progress, as the bottom was covered with shingle and the water frequently got too deep, or the current too strong, necessitating an arduous climb round. Occasionally a water-snake or a crocodile contemplated me, and I did not care for them.

My compass was the best possible, and did not dither and ramble before pronouncing its polar judgment. A brother officer had given it to me when I started on my journey, and I sent many friendly thoughts towards him all through this day and the next.

The afternoon dragged wearily on to evening, and when it was too dark to go farther I wrung the water out of my shirt and shorts and stuffed them with leaves, on the happy foxhunting principle of putting newspaper round one's person inside wet breeches before a long ride home.

Since sleep, "tired Nature's sweet restorer", could not be expected to smile on me that night, I chose a suitable tree and parked my body at its foot. Then, after considering all the incidents of the day, I endeavoured to cast my mind across half the world to England, and to keep it there until I should require it again on the morrow.

Try as I would, my mind kept floating back to the present ridiculous situation. I remember wondering which of the two evils was preferable, a night with a raging thirst, but warm and dry, or one like the present, with all the water in the world, when Nature makes but a sorry bedfellow.

All things come to an end eventually, and so did this night. With the first grey streaks of dawn I pressed down the stream. It was just the same sort of going as the previous day, wading waist deep, clambering over rocks, and struggling through jungle on either bank. By about midday I had seen no sign of the village, and I knew that if I was on the right river I must have come to it long before. I came to the conclusion that by all the laws of probability I was on an entirely different river, but that the only thing to do was to push on until something happened. I filled my pockets with some rather doubtful-looking nuts, and went forward. The river-bed at this point was half a mile wide and overspread with dense elephant-grass. Then, by pure chance, since it was invisible from either side, I walked right on to an old elephant carcass. There was still a little meat left on the four feet, so I knew that I was all right, for natives will scrape the last ounce of flesh from any dead beast, to eat it perhaps many months afterwards. When, later that day, they came to take some more scraps, they led me

back to their village, which I had passed early that morning, having failed to see it from the river.

Sitting in front of a fire, with a dish of boiled bananas, I asked the head-man two questions. Firstly, whether the nuts I produced from my pocket were good. "Yes", he answered, "for elephants." And then I inquired how much farther it was to the natives down the river. The reply was nine days.

I could not have carried on down stream for nine days longer without food—so I knew that the slight chance of walking on the elephant carcass had saved my life. As the river was eight hundred yards wide at this point and full of dense undergrowth, my chance, I decided, had been about 1 in 160.

When I rejoined my porters I found that one of them had searched for me; the others had shown no concern. It was to their advantage that I should not return, since, had I not done so, they could have divided my belongings amongst themselves.

Eventually we got out of that infernal forest, and into the more open country of British East Africa. There I had one or two exciting moments with buffalo, elephant, and lion, and again the most dangerous experience was due to my own foolishness. I was in camp in the Serringetti Plains of Tanganyika, looking for lion. Early one morning I heard a lion roaring a little way along a dried-up river bed, and saw a nearly full-grown cub frolicking about outside. I raced off and followed it into cover: clusters of thick bushes with passages between them. Almost at once these clumps grunted at me—in front, on the right, and from the rear. Here was a troop, all round me and just out of sight. Then—Urgh-

wo-wo-wo!—from the front again, and oh, joy! a lion's head, ten paces away, peering through the grass. Wallop! and down he went with a horrid gurgling noise.

The place was now decidedly unhealthy. I had gone out that dawn with my last three rounds, and now had none left; there could be no dallying with an empty breech. Flight? Yes, this instant, but oh, heavens! which way?—At that moment, with a noiseless flop, for all the world like a great big cat jumping down from the tiles, a lioness sprang out of the bushes. She stood there, a tawny, dark-eyed queen, her forepaws on the shoulder of her late lamented lord, tail twitching, and uttering the most fearsome roars: an angry and very foul-mouthed lady. I dived headlong into the undergrowth, and ran nearly the whole way back to camp!

My native servant met me as I came in. "Hee! Bwana", he said, "look at this. I find it in the bedding. Two more rounds. Not good Bwana hunt Simba with only three rounds!" And as he turned to get my breakfast his face spoke most eloquently: "Allah! What a fool!" it said.

The most hazardous moment I had in the Arctic was in 1934, during a sledging journey across Greenland. When we were eight thousand feet above sea level, on the desolate snow wastes of the ice-cap, we had a very narrow escape.

We had been confined to our tent for two days in a snowstorm. During such periods of enforced and prolonged inactivity the deerskin rugs, which form an insulation between one's eiderdown sleeping-bag and the ice beneath, get very wet with condensation. One attempts to dry them by hanging them up in the peak of the tent, and burning two Primus stoves underneath them. While

this was being done the weather suddenly cleared up and we went outside to take an astronomical observation. As the skins were still very wet we pumped up the Primus stoves and left them burning, well clear of everything, having carefully rolled up the sleeping-bags and pushed them to the side of the tent. When, a little later, I was booking Arthur Godfrey's survey readings, I suddenly smelt burning. This was rather remarkable, as I have really no sense of smell, and indeed have scarcely ever smelt anything in my life. I looked up and saw smoke belching forth from the tent. We found a glorious fire: all one side of a sleeping-bag was burnt, together with one of our coats. A hole was burnt in the ground-sheet, and there were several holes in the tent, all the inside of which was scorched; but we got the fire out in time. It is uncertain how it can have started; the only explanation we could think of was that the heat had swelled the down inside one of the sleeping-bags, causing it to expand and fall over on to the stove. Of course, it was very foolish to have left the stoves burning like that. As it was a muggy afternoon we had gone outside leaving all our warm clothing in the tent, and this we should have lost had the tent been burnt down, in which case, since we were four hundred and fifty miles from the end of our journey, there would have been a disaster.

This incident was the only really hazardous moment in a sledging journey of nearly twelve hundred miles which in several respects created a record for Arctic travel; and it is another proof that adventures come only to the incompetent explorer.

XI

GAMBIAN GAMBLE

by REX HARDINGE

"ANY expedition to Africa would cost too much money, and I do not see how we could make a profit out of it."

The speaker was a business man in a London office, and his comment seemed to destroy my hopes of getting back to Africa for a trek far off the beaten track. But I made a bet with him that I would start from Dakar, the main port of French West Africa, and trek through Senegal into the little-known colony of British Gambia, and that the whole trip would not cost more than £50, including fares, kit and all expenses.

He laughed at me—but now it is my turn to laugh. Not only did I make my trek across Senegal and Gambia, and into Portuguese Guinea, but I found that no one had written a book about the British colony of Gambia for more than twenty years. So I tried my hand at that also, and have already got back my £50; so that my trip really cost me nothing at all!

Here I shall try to tell you some of the high spots of this most economical expedition.

First, as to the voyage. Even a third-class passage was more than I could pay, so I found a fourth class. I learned in Marseilles that French ships carry native soldiers and Syrian workpeople to Africa boxed up in the hold, like sardines. The steamer people did not want me to travel that way, and were scandalized when I described myself as a tourist. A fourth-class tourist was

evidently something unique. I discovered why when I saw the accommodation.

Imagine the hold of a ship furnished with nothing but superimposed tiers of iron-framed bunks; a gloomy, insanitary cavern, filled with a polyglot herd of native soldiers, Syrian families, two Hindus, and myself.

In the next bunk to me was a Syrian youth who suffered from intensive nightmares, so that my nights were mostly spent in shaking him awake—to tell him what I thought of him in a language which he did not understand. It was just as well. At my feet was an entire Syrian family—father, mother, and three small children. There was little light or air, no privacy and no attempt at keeping our quarters clean. Gambling was our only recreation, and I played mostly with the two Hindus, one of whom was a hatter by trade. Had I collected my winnings I could have set up in business, for I won most of his stock.

The soldiers played for their uniforms, some of which were newer than others. I do not know what the officers thought when Private Abdul paraded on Monday in brand-new tarboosh and tunic, and on Tuesday in the oldest garments in the detachment. But nothing was ever said.

One night of that voyage sticks in my mind. The soldiers were singing, and the rest of us were perched on our bunks, enjoying the concert, thrilled by the weird African chants.

Then, suddenly, the music went to the brain of one of the singers!

He was a great buck negro, and he suddenly went as mad as a hatter. His voice became a crazy shriek, froth

flecked the corners of his wide mouth, and his eyes were horrible to see. He got hold of the nozzle of a fire hose and began to lay about with it.

Crowded together as we were, there was only one place where we could escape him—and that was under the bunks. But we had had plenty of rough weather, and none of us had made any pretence to be good sailors, or to clean up the hold, so that those who sought shelter were not to be envied.

The moments which followed were hectic in the extreme. The sergeant flung a blanket over the madman's head, and the rest of us piled on top of him. Nobody, however, was seriously hurt.

Until we had a lifebelt practice on this voyage, I could never have believed that it was possible to fasten an ordinary ship's lifebelt in so many different wrong ways. One fourth-class passenger wore two sets, crossed over his chest like bandoliers.

On arrival at Dakar I found that the natives were far too sophisticated to act as carriers on a trek through the bush on foot. They all wore European clothes, or flowing robes, and multi-coloured hats and shoes. So I took a train, travelling away from the influence of the town, and was decanted at last outside a solitary hut, where I was welcomed by a native station-master, Europeanized by a white sun-helmet (very grubby), and a pen behind his ear. I managed to find a boy to carry my kit, so I set off on foot, across country, to a place called Kaolak, on the way to the Gambia frontier.

It was here that I first came up against the ground-nut, monkey-nut, pea-nut, or whatever you prefer to call it. At Kaolak I saw enough of these nuts to give indiges-

tion to all the monkeys in all the zoos in the world. And for the rest of my trip I was seldom allowed to forget that ground-nuts form the staple crop of this part of West Africa. The streets of Kaolak were heaped with them, and at every village in Senegal and Gambia I came upon mountains, sixty feet high, composed of nothing but nuts. Even the bush-paths were plentifully sprinkled with them, so that I "lived on the country" in more senses than one. I met motor-trucks driven by speed-crazy natives, all loaded with the eternal ground-nut. Everybody—white and black—could think and talk of nothing else, for I had arrived at the height of the season.

Adventures come to the adventurous, and I had my share of them. With equipment cut down to the barest necessities, and accompanied only by one boy—Fali, by name, and a great lad he was!—and such additional porters as I could collect from time to time (they were never more than three), I pushed on, keeping right off the beaten track, and visiting villages where a white man was seldom seen, except when the Commissioner was on tour.

There was one unforgettable night of tragedy, when a village was completely destroyed by fire. A bush-fire swept suddenly down on the cluster of reed-and-grass native huts, and the head-man had been too lazy to clear a fire-path. The crop had been partially gathered, the precious ground-nuts being stacked in the huts, and in the yards between them.

I am never likely to forget the fight to save that village. I had been visiting the local French trader, and we hurried to the scene of the fire. While he made

herculean efforts to evacuate the place, trying to rescue the precious nuts as well as the personal effects of the inhabitants, I organized an attempt to beat back the flames.

That was a vivid experience—slashing at grass and bushes in a welter of flame and choking smoke; fighting a hopeless battle against a voracious, relentless foe. Our final effort was to tear down the huts in order to increase the space between them. But as fast as we demolished the front walls, the flames licked round to catch the back as though snatching them out of our hands.

My last impression of that fire is the picture of a dead child. Poor little thing—its mother had miscounted the heads of her brood when she rushed them to shelter!

Then there was a night when a canoe capsized and I was tipped into a crocodile-infested stream. I scrambled through the most evil-smelling swamp imaginable, and reached the shelter of a village, only to be called upon by the head-man to give medical aid to a woman who had made a bad job of having a baby. That was a queer business, for the woman needed stimulants more than anything, and all I could do was to brew some extra-strong coffee, and leave the rest to the faith that sometimes works miracles. Both mother and child were doing well when I went on my way.

An egg nearly brought my trip to an abrupt end. Just an egg, which I was hoarding for my breakfast. Unknown to me, the boy put the egg inside the tent with me, considering that the safest place for it. I do not know if it was really the egg that attracted the snake which I woke to find stropping itself against my bare

foot; but I do know that I have never been more terrified in my life. I cannot like snakes.

The tent was a small "patrol" type, and I was sleeping on a ground-sheet. I sat up hurriedly, and brought the whole tent down on top of me, the snake and I being wrapped up together in the folds. I was sweating with sheer terror when at last I managed to fight my way clear of the canvas. It is a nightmare business to be wrapped up in a collapsed tent at any time, and the knowledge that my struggles might at any moment bring me up against an angry, frightened snake made the experience a thousand times worse.

Those were just the high spots in a trip that was full of interest, during which I learnt much about a British colony which is merely a thin red line on the map to the average Englishman.

Gambia is a curious little strip of British territory, consisting simply of a narrow strip of land on each side of a wide, sluggish river, and surrounded by an ocean of French territory. Up this river went such explorers as Mungo Park, many of them never to return, and down it now comes—not the gold that some of those adventurers were seeking—but ground-nuts!

The climax to my trip came after I crossed the frontier into Portuguese Guinea.

My boys had been restive for some time, grumbling among themselves, but I could not make out the cause of the trouble. Then I woke one morning to find that all except Fali had deserted me. Even Fali was gloomy, and tried to persuade me to turn back, although he swore that wherever I went, he would go. I insisted on pushing ahead, planning to make for the Ivory Coast.

But I never reached the other frontier of Portuguese Guinea.

A sudden pain crumpled me up as I was trekking along the path. This was followed by almost complete collapse. Attacked by sudden, inexplicable illness, I was forced to turn back. What a march that was! Accompanied only by Fali, I had to carry on in short, painful spurts. I did not rest for long, even at night, and, of course, the only lions that I met on the trip chose that occasion for advertising themselves. But in the end I managed to stagger back into Gambia, where a friendly chief lent me a pony, on which I got back to within reach of the railway, and so—home!

But I could not understand the illness which had brought my trip to so sudden a conclusion. I am most particular about drinking-water on trek, and I personally supervise the boiling of my own supply; so my illness could not be due to bad water, that most usual of culprits.

It was not until after my return to England that I learnt that two French military airmen had been killed and eaten by cannibals not far from the very spot where I was forced to turn back. News travels so far and fast among natives that my boys may have known that one of the ghastly secret societies which flourish in Guinea was then on the rampage, and making human sacrifices. This would explain why the porters deserted me, rather than take any chance of blundering into a cannibal pot. And Fali—well, he would not desert me; but that illness of mine came on so suddenly, after eating food which he had prepared, that I am forced to wonder whether he did not deliberately “doctor” that food, and so make me too ill to go on into the danger that lay ahead. I cannot be sure;

those are simply the facts of the case, and I leave you to draw your own conclusions.

My trip was spoilt by this climax, but I am glad to say that I am writing this on the eve of my departure on another economical expedition. My passage is already booked, and who can say what the climax will be this time?

XII

CAPE TO CAIRO ON FOOT

by R. A. MONSON

SHOULD any of my readers be thinking of taking a tramp abroad, they may be interested to learn that it is just 7,628 miles from Adderley Street, Capetown, to the bronze lions on the approach to the Kasr-el-Nil bridge, Cairo. That is, if you travel by way of the South African Karroo, the Limpopo River, Rhodesia, the Zambesi, the Belgian Congo, Lake Tanganyika, Mount Kilimanjaro, Kenya, Lake Rudolph, Uganda, the Sudan and Egypt.

I know that that is the exact distance, because when I was on the sub-editorial staff of a newspaper in Perth, Western Australia, a young adventurer breezed into my office and suggested, after some preliminaries, that we should join forces and walk from Capetown to Cairo together. Because I was only twenty-three, and thirsting for adventure, I agreed to go with him.

We started off from Capetown a few weeks later, but he left me after we had covered a thousand miles, and I went on alone until I was joined on the Southern Rhodesian border by another Australian, Mr. James Hunter Wilson, who is now practising accountancy in Johannesburg, between occasional excursions into the wilds again.

We completed the journey together, in company with Umbashi, a magnificent heathen of the Awemba tribe, who joined up with us near Lake Mweru, in Central Africa, and who came on to Cairo with us.

The walk took us fifteen and a half months, and when you consider that we had to cross four foul deserts in the height of the hot season, that we negotiated two snow-capped mountains, in addition to wading through swirling floods that often reached to our waists, and battling through the Sudd, a mosquito-plagued swamp six hundred miles across, you may agree that the time we made was not so bad. Our actual walking time averaged from twenty-five to thirty miles a day. On one occasion we covered seventy-six miles in twenty-four hours, and there were other long and arduous stages, between desert water-holes, that had to be covered in the shortest time possible.

We slept under the stars, on the ground, most of the time. Not infrequently we shivered through the night, wrapped up in our capes while the rain pelted down and flooded the country-side around to a depth of nearly a foot.

We lived on boiled rice and oatmeal, and the game we bagged with our rifles. I might say here that we thrived on our experiences, and arrived at our goal fighting fit. For myself, I finished the journey a stone and a half heavier than when I started.

Ladies need not be discouraged from attempting the trip. Wilson lost a few surplus pounds.

For the first half of our trip we carried all our belongings in packs on our backs, but after reaching the Congo, where we got hold of more camping gear, we travelled with a safari of six native porters, whom we changed from time to time at the various villages *en route*. Later, our equipment was carried successively by donkey, mule, bull, and camel transport, according to the type of country we were traversing.

Naturally, Africa did not let us pass through scot-free. We both suffered severely from malaria, and we were pestered for weeks by the bites of the tsetse flies, the carriers of the deadly sleeping-sickness. One kind of sleeping-sickness finishes you off in nine months; the other takes nine years. I know that we did not contract the first variety. As I am thinking of buying some furniture on the instalment system, I will not say anything about the second.

Apart from the mosquitoes and the tsetse flies, there were about a hundred other types of stinging insect pests to torture us nightly. They almost drove us mad at times, particularly in the swamps. I think we were stung by every insect pest known to entomology, and a few unclassified specimens.

I am afraid that I am rather stressing the unpleasant side of what was really a grand experience. It was truly an amazingly interesting journey.

Africa, as it unrolled before us day by day, was really one thrilling and graphic adventure story, richly illustrated with unforgettable pictures of native and animal life, and with many a landscape that took the breath away by its sheer beauty. The game herds of Tanganyika, a combined war-dance of several native tribes, and the grandeur and serenity of Kilimanjaro's ice-cap by moonlight, are but a few of those tableaux.

Of course, in an adventure story, where the pictures have all come to life, those who thought to read and gaze may easily become engaged as principals in dangerous and exciting episodes, and this was what happened in our case.

Once, while we were passing down a track on the

Congo-Northern Rhodesian border, "finis" was nearly written to the story for one of us.

We were passing through deep, reedy grass when a sudden loud rustling warned us that something was coming very quickly our way. The next instant a large green mamba, the deadliest of all African snakes, and by far the most savage, shot out of the thicket and made straight for us. It darted at my legs, which were protected to the knee by top-boots, but bare above that to the point where my shorts began. I jumped, and the vicious devil swerved and made for Wilson. Wilson, in turn, leaped into the air, and the snake twisted towards me once more, its wicked little head raised, and its mouth open ready to sink its death-dealing fangs into any flesh it could reach. I nearly fell over Wilson in my effort to leap clear. It was all over in a flash, for the next move of the mamba was to slither away into the grass on the opposite side of the track, while we looked round unsuccessfully for a stick with which to despatch it. It was quite a close shave, because death usually follows a mamba bite within a very brief interval.

Still, life was not all mambas ; we had our gay moments, too. I still get a chuckle out of this one : One morning in May, coming down the fertile slopes of Kilimanjaro, after an attempt to climb to the summit, we passed through a native village, set in a banana plantation. We bought two dozen bananas, and began to bargain about the price, while the whole village thronged round us. Our knowledge of Swahili, the tongue in which the negotiations were conducted, was then very limited, and that accounts for the confusion and uproar in which we

left the village. The following is the dialogue which we imagined took place:

Ourselves : "How much?"

Half the village in chorus, after studying the heavens : "Ten cents, Babwana."

Ourselves, well pleased at getting two dozen bananas for one penny : "All right. Here's ten cents."

Pandemonium, and cries of : "But, Babwana, we want twenty cents!"

"Eh? Look here. This lot—that's five cents. This lot—that's five cents too. Now how much?"

Half the village, after again consulting the heavens in a puzzled way : "Ten cents."

"Right. Here are your ten cents. Good-bye!" And away we went, with the whole village jabbering protests, and gesticulating wildly behind us. For the sake of a stable economy, travellers in Africa are expected to pay the ruling prices, neither more nor less, for their purchases. To break the rule only makes it inconvenient for other travellers, and leads to discontent among the natives.

But these fellows seemed madly persistent. We stopped and argued it all out with them again several times, but always with the same result. They evidently took us for fools or rogues, and we took them for unreasonable fellows.

Late that afternoon I was musing on their queer behaviour. The African native is a very honest fellow, and we had had little trouble with them. Suddenly a light dawned on me.

"Jim," I said, "what does 'Centi N'Gapi?' mean?"

"How much?" he replied.

Jim stopped suddenly. "Gosh! We were saying 'Saar N'Gap?' to those mutts, weren't we? It means 'What's the time?'" Then we both roared.

No wonder those natives thought we were mad, and rogues in addition.

This is actually how our bargaining had been conducted:

Ourselves: "What's the time?"

Half the village in chorus, after studying the heavens: "Ten o'clock, Masters."

Ourselves: "All right. Here's ten cents."

And so on through the whole ludicrous business. They must have thought us queer fellows.

I have space for only one more incident of the trek. It is hard to decide which one to relate. I think I will close on a thrilling note. Perhaps I am the only man who has been chased by a rogue elephant, and caught, and has lived to tell the tale.

Near Manga Mountain, on the border of Kenya and Tanganyika, we came unexpectedly on a huge bull elephant. He proved to be what is known as a rogue elephant—that is, one that has been turned out of the herd because of his temper. We were studying him at rather close quarters when he suddenly charged. Wilson wisely bolted, as we had no permits to shoot elephants. For an instant I held my ground, and then, as the brute, trumpeting madly, came headlong for me, I too turned and dashed for my life after Wilson. The moments that followed were the most thrilling of my life. It was decidedly the narrowest escape from death I ever experienced.

With the thunder of mighty feet behind me, and the

elephant's staccato trumpeting shattering the silence of the bush, I had all the impetus to speed I needed, and I ran as I had never run before.

But in a few strides Tembu was up with me. I saw his huge trunk over my head; then I felt his great knees actually touching me. I remember, too, that his huge ears hung like mighty grey sails above me. I dodged sharply to an anthill. Tembu was as quick. As I spun away from the anthill at a right angle, the side of the hill went up in a cloud of red dust. Tembu had reached it. He was on me again.

Saplings went down before his rush and brushed me as they fell. The great brute was literally bundling me along before him. Almost sick with exhaustion, I waited for his trunk to fall, but Tembu, who could have caught me up at any moment, was, for the time, content with bundling forward so long as I kept going. His screams of rage never abated for a moment.

Then, as I reached a Gusu thorn thicket, I saw his trunk swinging down over my shoulders and groping like a tentacle in front of my face. He was about to end the mad rush. I dived sideways from under him, taking a flying header into the thorn thicket. Rearing up on his back legs, Tembu came crashing in after me, missing me by inches with his forelegs, but smacking me to the earth with his trunk as I tried to clamber up. In that thorn brake he tried to trample me into the dust, but I managed to wriggle from under his feet, and slide out of the brake. Clear of the thorns, I fell almost unconscious on the ground. The brute, still mad, kept after me. He actually trampled my helmet, which I held in my hand, to pulp, but I staggered up and fell in the bush to one side,

and Tembu lost sight of me. The last I saw of him was his body turned slightly away from me, his great ears straining forward as if wondering where I had got to. I crept thankfully out of the danger zone, and a few minutes later rejoined Wilson.

That is a true story, but I do not like telling it. I hate being called a liar.

Do not forget—it is just 7,628 miles, going the way I have suggested—and mind the big puddle at the corner of Uganda and the Sudan.

XIII

TREKKING ACROSS TIBET

by RONALD KAULBACK

“LIVING DANGEROUSLY” is a frightfully hard title to live up to. After all, whether a thing is dangerous or not is only a matter of opinion, and it seems to me that the people who ought to be best qualified to talk about dangerous living are those who live in the big cities. I know very well that when I got back to London, after living a quiet and peaceful existence in Tibet and Burma, I was scared out of my life at having to cross the streets, with cars whizzing by on all sides, and a deafening noise of hooters and engines to unnerve me still further. Anyway, the only thing for me to do is to give a brief account of the sort of thing that you come up against in Tibet and Burma.

During practically the whole of 1933 I was on an expedition with Captain Kingdon Ward, the botanist and explorer. We went into South-eastern Tibet by way of Assam, journeying up the valley of the Lohit Brahmaputra, where the going was very unpleasantly heavy. It took us three weeks to get into Tibet itself after leaving Sadiya, the last town in India, and for almost the whole of that time we were plunging through jungle, with so dense an undergrowth of great bramble thickets that we could very seldom see more than three or four yards at a time. The path was no more than a slippery streak of mud, which stretched on and on, over and under fallen trees, in and out of precipitous ravines, and across the faces

of cliffs. The people who live in that deplorable valley are Mishmi hillmen, and until a very few years ago they made a practice of murdering anybody, white or native, who dared to set foot in their country, and triumphantly hanging their heads from poles along the paths; but though they were as surly and unfriendly as they could be when we went through, they were never actively hostile.

We crossed the border into Tibet at the beginning of April, and could almost have imagined that we had suddenly stepped into another and better world, simply because at last we were out of that infernal jungle, and could see for several miles up and down stream. It felt just as if we had been blind, and had suddenly got our sight back again.

The south-east part of Tibet is just a maze of valleys and mountain ranges, and, of course, it is only at the bottom of the valleys that the people live. Every six or seven miles we came across a village, surrounded by its fields of rice, barley and wheat. This sounds as if there was a fairly dense population there, but I should explain that in that part of the world a village may consist of anything from one to twelve houses. The most trying thing about these villages (apart from the fleas, which swarm there in legions) is that they are infested by large and ferocious dogs. Every time we came near a settlement we had to arm ourselves with clubs to beat off their attacks, which generally started in mass formation (to weaken our morale), and then degenerated into a series of energetic skirmishes on our flanks and rear. Fond as I am of dogs, I could find absolutely nothing in their favour, and would gladly have seen them all slaughtered without the slightest feeling of remorse.

During the time we were in Tibet only one mail reached us from the outside world. This was due to an unfortunate occurrence, after which no one was at all keen to take over the job of courier to us. We had received news that a runner was close behind us bearing letters from Sadiya, and were of course delighted. Great was our horror, therefore, when one day we heard from a Mishmi that the poor fellow's body had been found, with his throat cut from ear to ear, in a ravine alongside the track. He must have been ambushed, murdered and robbed while only a short distance from our camp. Fortunately the miscreant, having no use for the letters themselves, had thrown them into a bush, and they were duly retrieved. Our joy in getting them was naturally marred by this tragedy.

Our first two months of travel over the border were comparatively easy, following the native paths that wound in and out over the valleys. Towards the end of May, however, the countryside suddenly changed, and the river up whose course we were moving came rushing out of a most formidable gorge. Hardly a hundred and fifty feet apart, the walls rose above us for quite two thousand feet, and on gazing up out of the darkness reigning at the bottom only the narrowest strip of sky was visible. It was no longer possible to follow the banks by the river, and the path ascended the cliffs on ladders made of notched logs, the climbing of which was most precarious for the loaded porters. Near the top the path continued northwards, sometimes following the natural ledges, sometimes jutting out over the abyss, on timbers driven crazily into holes cut in the rock-face. We were forced to go slowly. One

false step, and there would have been no stopping until one reached the roaring torrent below. It took us four hours to cover two miles.

The bottom of that gorge lay at an altitude of about eight thousand feet, I suppose, but less than a dozen miles farther on we camped on a glacier at over fourteen thousand feet, and miserably cold we were. There were no fewer than five other glaciers within a couple of miles of us, and nothing to see but ice, snow and bare grey granite. We were there for about a week, waiting for a big pass ahead of us to get clear enough of snow to allow us to cross it, and there were frequent blizzards, which made things still more unpleasant. They were bad enough if they came by day, but at night they were the very devil. Where we were camped the glacier was covered by two or three feet of boulders, and as we could not drive in tent-pegs we had to fasten the guy-ropes to these. Every time a blizzard came along our tents began to come adrift, and no sooner had we struggled out and fastened the ropes to bigger and better boulders (getting soaked through with sleet and frozen in doing so) than another huge blast would tear them from their moorings, and out we had to totter again. Largely as a result of all this we were gibbering with cold the whole time we were there, and in none too good a temper.

That was my last camp with Captain Kingdon Ward. He was going to push on farther north to the monastery of Shuiden Gomba, but I had not been able to get permission to go any farther with him, so there we said good-bye, and I turned south again.

By far the shortest way back to civilization was the route by which we had come, along the Lohit Valley into

Assam, but the monsoon was in full blast by then, and the track was flooded out, so the only thing to be done was to see if there was a passable way down into Burma. It seemed that there was, and after crossing a pass at fourteen thousand feet, we found ourselves at the head of one of the sources of the Irrawaddy, with a more or less straight run through to Fort Hertz, the last outpost in Upper Burma. Our march down the valley, however, was an absolute nightmare. Never in my wildest dreams had I imagined that so many leeches could exist in one small area. We were on the move that day for some six hours, along a narrow path overgrown with long grass, and leading steeply down through dripping jungle, with the rain falling like ramrods. From all sides the leeches came wriggling and looping towards us, reaching out from every blade of grass, and dropping from the leaves of the bushes. I started by keeping a tally, and by the end of the first two hours I had dealt with a hundred and eighty-six leeches on my arms and legs. By that time I was dispirited, and gave up counting, or, indeed, trying to remove them. The lower we got the worse they became, so that in the end we dared not stop to pull them off, because if we stood still for an instant a dozen more leeches fastened on us for every one we removed. At last, rather low in our minds, but thankful to have finished the day's march, we came to a village where willing helpers de-leeched us, finding intruders even in our hair! I had come off pretty lightly on the whole, but another member of the party was in a bad way. He had been wearing shoes, so that his feet had proved easy game for the leeches, which we found swarming on them in great clotted masses when we took off his socks. From

his feet they had spread up his legs inside his trousers, and he had lost so much blood that we had to wait in the village for three days to let him pick up his strength. It sounds almost incredible, but there were a hundred and six leeches on his two feet alone, like so many huge bloated slugs. We met with these pests all the way down through Burma, but never again in such numbers.

From the Tibetan border to Fort Hertz was about a month's journey, and we must have seen, on an average, one snake every half mile of the way. The country was simply stiff with them. Personally, I was rather pleased than otherwise, as one of my jobs was to collect reptiles for various museums, and in any case I have no dislike of snakes. Still, I was worried when I was successfully bitten by a Russell's viper, which proved itself quicker than I. However, by taking drastic measures I achieved the distinction of being one of the very few people who have been bitten by one of these snakes and have lived to tell the tale; and that, in this age of records, is something, after all. I was much more frightened, I am afraid, by a huge but probably harmless spider, which sat up in the thatch of a hut I was using one night, and leered at me horribly with all its eight eyes, until I was almost too terrified to go to sleep.—But then, to go back to what I said in the beginning, it is only what one is afraid of that seems to be dangerous.

XIV

EXPEDITION TO LAKE RUDOLF

by V. E. FUCHS

LAKE RUDOLF, Uganda, was discovered in 1887 by two Austrian explorers, Count Teleki and Admiral von Hohnel. Since that time a number of expeditions have visited the area, doing a certain amount of scientific work, but there still remains a great deal to be learnt about the country and its people.

In the January of 1934 the Lake Rudolf Rift Valley Expedition left England equipped to carry out many lines of research. The first four months were spent on the west side of the lake, where a great number of the so-called "permanent water-holes" had dried up owing to the failure of the rains during the preceding two years. For us this was a nuisance: it held up many journeys, but for the natives it was a catastrophe bringing poverty and even death. One old Turkana chief came to ask us if we would not bring rain, as his people were dying. At first we put him off as best we could, for he would not believe that we had not the power. Finally, on the strength of the dark clouds which had been hanging in the sky, far to the north, for many days, we told him that rain would fall within a fortnight. A few days later we left that place, but afterwards we heard that on the fourteenth day six inches of rain fell in four hours. So we felt that we had not let him down.

To us of the Expedition the arrival of the rains proved even more troublesome than the drought had

been, for the dry sandy plains were now converted into vast areas of mud. Into this our cars and lorry sank, and on it our camels could not keep their feet. The whole country became divided up by the rivers, normally dry and sandy gullies, but now rushing torrents.

It was near one of the larger of these that the Expedition's base camp was pitched. For a fortnight it flowed steadily between its banks, so that we were lulled into a sense of security, till suddenly one night it rose rapidly, and those in camp awoke to find the water swirling past the tent-poles. There was no time to waste; in an hour two cars and quantities of gear had been moved up on to a near-by rocky mound, but by the time we tried to move the loaded lorry the water was already too deep for it to be started. In the end a company of fifty natives managed to tow it clear of the deeper water.

A few days later, when the flood had subsided, the flat ground where the camp had been pitched had disappeared, and there remained nothing but a matted tangle of roots laid bare by the removal of some three feet of soil.

The second half of the Expedition's work was to be done on the east side of the lake. This part of the Rudolf basin has to be approached from Marsabit, some hundred and twenty miles east of the south end of the lake. In that country camels are the only means of transport of any value, and even they find the going very arduous, owing to the rocky nature of the lava country.

It is on the islands along the south-east shore of the lake that a small tribe known as El Molo lives. The name itself means "The Miserable or Poor Ones", which indeed they are, for they are descended from the poorer

members of several tribes that at one time came to the lake to eke out a precarious existence by fishing. They do not admit their mixed origin, but maintain that they are one tribe, El Molo. Today they are only eighty-four in number, and are rapidly dying out. They live almost entirely on fish, crocodiles or turtles, which they catch in the lake. It is apparently this diet which is responsible for their characteristic deformity; that is, the forward bowing of the shin, in some cases so marked that they appear to have a second and permanently bent knee somewhere close above the ankle.

It was after our stay with these people that we turned our attention to South Island. This island was the only remaining piece of land in that part of Africa which had never been visited by Europeans, or, as we thought at that time, by anyone at all, black or white. Seeing this great volcanic mass rising above the lake, like all the early explorers who had observed it, we searched from afar for signs of life, or some indication that it might be habitable could one reach it. During our month near the shore of the lake in the vicinity of the island we had watched the weather conditions day by day, so that we might be better able to judge, when the time came, just when to start on the crossing, and even more important, how long we might expect the calm period to last.

Finally, on July 25th, 1934, Mr. Martin and myself left the mainland at about eleven in the morning, while the water was still too rough to be comfortable. This did not worry us, as experience had shown that when the wind had begun to drop it continued to do so till a flat calm prevailed, and then, after an interval of perhaps

three or four hours, it would again rise steadily to almost gale force.

The actual crossing took us nearly an hour and three-quarters, and what a welcome awaited us! I wish I could do justice to the appearance of that rocky shore as it towered over us; rugged sheets of lava that clothed the whole flank of the island, their twisted and contorted forms reaching right down to the water's edge and seeming to come out to meet us, for here and there small jagged rocks rose out of the water, a warning of the treacherous formation of the coast which we were approaching. At the second attempt we landed in a small cove and prepared our camp for the night.

The next morning we set off up the steep lava slopes on the way to the highest point. Eight hundred feet above the lake the rough and crumbling lava gave way to volcanic ashes, which made the going much easier, and enabled a few scrubby bushes to grow in a half-hearted manner. We had come so convinced that there was no living thing on the island, except birds, that we could not at first believe the evidence of our eyes when we saw the tracks of some small four-footed animals. It was not until we stood upon the highest point of the island, some fifteen hundred feet above the lake, that the mystery was solved. There, far below us, grazed a herd of thirteen goats. Later, when we tried to approach them, we found that they were as wild as the wildest antelopes. From the highest peak we descended to the west shore, and then returned over the northern end of the island. During the day's walk we found numerous goat skeletons, and, most important of all, a few small pieces of fossilized human bone and one fragment of

pottery. It may be that these will give us a clue as to who it was that lived and died upon the island, though we shall never know how or why they went to it.

On the 28th of July, after three nights on the island, I left Martin to continue with the survey work, and crossed back to the mainland, so as to make another journey to the south end of the lake. The day I left for the south, Dr. Dyson, our medical officer, went over to the island with further supplies. Neither Martin nor Dyson was ever seen again. What fate overtook them we do not know, but it can only be supposed that for some reason the boat foundered on the return journey, and they were unable to reach the shore. When flying over the island it was possible to see every detail of the rocky shore, but there was no sign of boat or camp. We continued the search for two months; native scouts patrolled the shores of the lake; two more aeroplanes were used to search the other islands, and finally a second and larger boat was transported to the lake. In this Mr. MacInnes and myself, with one native, sailed seventy miles southward in an attempt to reach the island. At first continual storms delayed our progress; then one night the boat sank with a large part of the equipment. It was salvaged and mended, but we were scarcely ready to start when fever claimed two of the party, so that the final attempt had to be delayed still farther.

All these days wasted meant that time was running short, and finally, in spite of the fact that both the other members of the party were suffering badly from fever, it was decided to make a last attempt. For three hours we made good progress, but a breeze sprang up, which in two hours had reached gale force, blowing directly

from the island. The outboard engine was swamped three times before we were compelled to turn before the wind, when only two miles from our objective. It would have been madness to attempt a landing on those shores after dark, even if we could have reached them, which we could not. With storm-lug set, and steering by means of two sweeps, we finally managed to beach the boat on the mainland between ten and eleven that night.

Our time was up, and we had to abandon our last forlorn search for anything that might have shown what had happened to our companions. During the search two oars, two tins and Dr. Dyson's hat were found. It seems certain that they were lost while attempting to cross from the island to the mainland.

Dr. Dyson, British, of Cambridge University, was a rising young surgeon. Mr. Martin, an American citizen, of Oxford and Yale Universities, was a promising forester, and a keen surveyor. Both these splendid young men, whom we of the Expedition had learnt to love and respect, have added their names to the long list of those who have given their lives in the search for knowledge.

XV

TRAVELS IN LURISTAN

by MISS FREYA STARK

LURISTAN is one of those engaging names which sound as if they could not exist. Many, probably, have never heard of it. It is a mountainous bit of country which lies east of the desert of Iraq, and Iraq is west of Persia and east of Syria. I made my way there from Baghdad by motor-car across the desert, and then, with two native muleteers and a guide, over the high mountain wall into the tribal land. The face of the Near East is changing very rapidly wherever a motor-car can travel. The only way still to see the old East is to go into country too difficult even for the strongest car. There are many parts of these Persian mountain ranges which are yet as primitive as they have ever been.

Apart from the need to know the language, I think there is only one real difficulty in the sort of travel which I undertook there—the snag about it is *not* the danger or the difficulty, but the discomfort. I did not think it safe to travel with more luggage than was absolutely necessary. I had a sheepskin to sleep in, two tins of biscuits and some Bovril, medicines, a change of clothes, the *Pilgrim's Progress* and a few little presents. This meant relying on the tribesmen's camps for all I needed in the way of food and lodging. The natives are mostly very poor people, living in little groups of black tents roofed over with oak branches in summer, and separated by distances of forest or mountain. They have

their flocks about them, and fields of corn or rice, according to the amount of water in the district, which is not usually much. Chopped straw was often all I could get for my mules to eat. I travelled at the end of the summer, and everything was so dry that even the sheep and goats had no milk to give, so that there was little to eat except the flat girdle bread the people mostly live on, and an occasional chicken. The latter was a great sacrifice, which they were always most ready to make for me as an honoured guest. The days were still hot, but the nights—at a height of five or six thousand feet—were already beginning to get cold, especially when the fire in the tent died down about 2 a.m. Sometimes I used to sleep in the women's side of the tent, which is screened off with reed matting from that of the men; but usually I preferred to sleep in the porch.

Like most pastoral people the world over, the Lurs were extremely hospitable, and I think that, because I absolutely relied on their hospitality, I was far safer among them than any protection other than quite a large escort could have made me. But though this dependence upon them added a great deal to the interest of my journey, I must admit that it did not make it very comfortable; and it is the constant discomfort, and the fact that you are hardly ever left alone, which is really the only disadvantage about such travel. Apart from that, there are two real difficulties. One of them is to get into the country at all, and the other is to find a suitable guide. The parts of the world which I find amusing are almost always places where the various authorities do not wish to see one—the only thing to do is to let them find you well inside their borders as late as possible.

I had a passport that could bear examination, but my guide had none *at all*, and had to buy one for 4s., from a smuggler friend, who turned up in a long white tunic with a sash and dagger at his waist, looking very like someone out of a chorus. We spent three days in the last village near the border negotiating this business, and keeping ourselves as inconspicuous as possible. By the end of that time we had made friends with several smugglers, who now form almost a secret society along the western border of Persia. They will hand you on from one to the other, and one of their own people can travel about for months without ever being discovered by the police.

On your guide your popularity among the tribesmen largely depends. While you sit, drinking small glasses of tea with the head-man, your guide is explaining *you*, and telling anecdotes about you to the assembled company. Even if the atmosphere starts by being stiff and unfriendly, a good guide will soon smooth it all out. At the same time he himself must be known to the particular tribe you travel among: and this is not an easy matter to arrange in a country cut up into as many different families and feuds as are the Persian hills. One of my most devoted guides in North-East Luristan, who secured me a charming welcome for two days when riding through his own land, appeared to have shot or been shot at by someone wherever we went outside his boundary. One night's rest was completely shattered by the fact that a cousin of a man whom he had killed while defending himself on a mountain pass, happened to be dining with our hosts at the same time as we were. They finally persuaded him to go away to the next tribe—and we all felt rather relieved.

The mountain passes are the dangerous points in Luristan. Young men who are bored with life or agriculture round their camps, go off for a week or two, hold up travellers on the passes, and then come back to their tribes with the booty. It is almost impossible to catch or trace them, because they are not professional robbers—and anyway, the police rarely venture into the central parts of the country except in fairly large forces. This was some five years ago, when the policing of the country was less efficient than now.

I never saw a bandit myself, though we used to hear about them. But the technique of the business was frequently explained to me. They wear white so as to be less visible among the limestone rocks. In fact, most of the tribesmen of North-West Luristan still wear cloaks of white felt, and close-fitting white felt caps. A little below the pass, one of them advances to hold up the caravan as it climbs. Wise travellers will then hand over whatever is asked for. If they resist, the bandit vanishes again among the rocks and bushes: the caravan proceeds, seemingly quite safe, until it reaches the narrow defile at the top, where it gets shot at from both sides, and is probably never heard of again.

When I heard how often such incidents happened, I asked my guide how the Armenian and Jewish dealers in antiques can travel in this country. They come quite often to buy bronzes which the tribesmen dig up in ancient graveyards. "They bribe their safety", said my guide, "by bringing up bullets for the robbers."

I was about a fortnight in this country before three policemen came riding after me and I was politely but firmly moved off. They took me a two days' ride to their

small capital. Here they were trying to build a town, and rows of houses were growing up among the black tents of the Luristan tribesmen which surround it. They kept me for four days waiting for instructions from Teheran. They gave me a little house of my own, one table and two chairs, and treated me with great courtesy. But when the instructions came I was put into the hands of one sergeant and three policemen, and taken, with great politeness, but very firmly, a four days' ride back to the Iraq border.

That was the end of my journey in Luristan. From there I went to Baghdad and so home. Luristan is still a most fascinating and unknown country for an archaeologist, and I very much hope to go there again some day.

N.B.—Miss Stark's travels in Luristan were made some years ago, and her comments on the conditions obtaining in the country must not be taken as applicable to the present régime.—ED.

XVI

CAMEROONS

by IVAN T. SANDERSON, F.L.S., F.R.G.S.

I AM going to try to give you an impression of the more humorous and adventurous aspects of an expedition that I made to the Cameroon Mountains in West Africa, ostensibly for the sole purpose of collecting small animals for the British Museum and Cambridge University.

My colleague, George Russell, and I managed to land ourselves in the isolated bush-station of Mamfe through the medium of a number of boats, which constantly diminished in size as we travelled away from civilization into the wilds. From Mamfe the real task we had set ourselves began, and we constantly returned to this place throughout the expedition, to replenish our supplies and despatch home the thousands of specimens that we collected.

As those who have travelled will know, there are only two real dangers that are a constant menace to the traveller. These are domestic complications and disease. Wild animals, tornadoes and over-zealous hordes of black men may all be classed as "acts of God" (if they are ever encountered at all), and should be treated accordingly—as good jokes, or welcome adventures which relieve the monotony of travel. We therefore decided to spend the first six weeks of our valuable time around Mamfe station, so that we could be sure of the organization of our native staff, our food supply and our health,

while in the meantime we studied the animals found in the lands cleared of virgin forest.

This proved a wise course of action, for thanks to West Africa's treacherous climate we both went down with malarial fever as promptly as could be expected.

We then got together sufficient native porters, as roads are unknown in this part of the world, and trekked off into the depth of the jungle. The virgin forest extends like an unbroken blanket for hundreds of miles north of Mamfe, and in it we pitched our first camp. The hundred-odd porters were paid off and sent home, and we were left with out domestic staff of four, and seven native youths, whom we had trained as taxidermists and collectors, to tackle the important work of trapping and preserving specimens.

The second night after we arrived we left camp, with two boys and a small hurricane lamp, to visit our trap lines, and promptly got lost. Any part of the jungle looks like any other part, especially at night, and our boys were no help, as they came from a distant tribe. For hours we wandered about, wriggling under masses of thorn-covered creepers, climbing precipitous banks, and wading little rivers, until we came out into a small patch of tall grass. Here we heard the throb of distant drums, as the blanket of trees no longer acted like a damper to all sounds. Cupping our hands behind our ears, we located the direction from which it came, and set off into the forest again, full of hope; but hours passed, and I began to suspect that we were moving in a circle. One of our boys swarmed up a tree, trying to catch the sound of drumming again. A scream heralded his undignified arrival in our midst at ground level. He had sat on a

tree-ants' nest! This decided us; we built a rough shelter, and composed ourselves to sleep on the sodden ground, with the eerie gruntings and coughings of a leopard unpleasantly close at hand.

As day broke we set out again, only to find that we had slept within a few hundred yards of our camp!

Later we moved to a tiny native village in the depths of the jungle. Here we squeezed ourselves and all our kit into a native hut, and got busy with the collecting. My colleague fell dangerously ill with a very bad fever, that showed all the symptoms of the dreaded yellow fever, which is rife in the district, and had taken a toll of seven white men's lives the year before.

The third day after we arrived, as we were sitting quietly at work in the evening, out of a perfectly clear sky, a tornado suddenly struck us. Everything went out into the night, and solid water swept into the hut. In a few minutes it was all over. Groping in the darkness for a torch, I went out in search of our boys, but they were nowhere to be seen. Eventually I located the tent which I had allotted to them for use as a work-room; it was now lodged among the trees farther down the hillside. As it heaved in the darkness, black legs, boxes and half-stuffed animals fell out, and roars of muffled laughter could be heard. The tornado had lifted it, with the boys inside it, clean off the ground, and had hurled it several yards down the hill.

A few days later our greatest peril descended upon us. A huge drove of ants, covering the ground for acres, advanced on our hut. We had just time to build a ring of fire all round us, with dry grass, before they got too close, and even then their myriads of tiny bodies piled up

so fast that in some places they extinguished the fire. These ants have been known to sweep a whole village clean, eating all the vermin, and even picking the bones of any unfortunate inhabitants who were too young or too infirm to run away.

In the spring we trekked northwards out of the forest, to the grass-covered mountains beyond. Here we lived among a wonderful tribe of happy, friendly cannibals, who had seen a white man only twice before. Their chief, a man of outstanding character and dignity, arranged a mighty tribal dance for us, for which a band of twenty-eight drums provided the music. We counted fourteen rhythms all being played at once—syncopated rhythms more complicated and thrilling than anything attempted by our modern dance bands. This chief expounded for us the religion of his tribe, who, although they believe in many ju-jus and spirit idols, are essentially monotheists, worshipping one supreme God, and recognizing His omnipotence and sublime goodness just as we do.

In this country we found many strange beasts : among them a spider, which, when fully expanded, covered a dish twelve inches by eight, frogs with hairs, and gorillas in plenty. A huge male gorilla, killed by a native hunter, had an arm-span of over six feet, and a baby gorilla that was brought to us lived like a child in our midst for many months.

We got lost here too, but this time in grass so tall that it reached several feet above our heads. We did not spend the night in the open on this occasion, for which we were truly grateful, because the grass is full of deadly puff-adders and other poisonous snakes, and troops of

baboons persisted in rolling great stones down the steep slopes of the rocky hills as we passed beneath them. These baboons were disconcertingly human, digging up roots with stones, and placing sentries on the high crags to watch our movements.

At the start of the early rains in the mountains we descended into the forests again, but the climate is so exhausting at the high altitudes that we found this a difficult job. Also there were not enough porters to be had, and the rivers were swollen with rain, so that our supplies of small coins with which to buy food could not be sent to us. We straggled down, sometimes with half our kit a day's march behind us, in charge of one of the boys. As we passed our old camps we found that all the wooden objects which we had left behind had sprouted green leaves, and after a few days one of our tables, which we had made of native woods, began to put forth green shoots. Telegraph poles always take root in this country, and grow so fast that the wires are carried far up into the trees and stretched until they break.

From Mamfe we journeyed down the river in native canoes, whose paddlers called a strike one day as dusk was falling. So we composed ourselves to sleep, and the swift stream did the rest, bearing us to our destination almost as fast as the natives could have done.

Here was our last camp—at a place called Nko, where we hunted the great river-cows or manatees. A number of native chiefs gathered to meet us, as they had never seen two white men together before. After a palaver I put a record on our gramophone. The oldest chief was so impressed and amazed that he almost had a fit, and

proceeded to shout at me for some minutes on end. The interpreter explained that the old man thought me very wicked for keeping men in the little black box and making them play and sing for me. When I pointed out that it was not wicked, as it gave pleasure to all men, he pondered a minute and then heartily agreed, after which they all fell to dancing.

Thus we left Africa, the land where all men dance for joy and for sorrow, and returned to this civilized land, the richer by seven thousand valuable scientific specimens and a great many unique experiences, which we shall always remember as some of the most striking episodes of our lives.

XVII

VOLCANO

by COMMANDER G. M. DYOTT

THE South American republic of Ecuador is famous for many things, chief of which is the large number of volcanoes found within its borders. A few years ago I was asked by a museum to collect specimens of the rocks found on the summits of these smouldering bonfires. Of course, collecting pebbles on the sea-shore may be a nice pastime for a summer's day, but when you have to climb sixteen thousand feet to the top of a volcano to get them it is another story.

I do not think any of my experiences as an explorer could equal what I went through on the summit of one of these peaks, called Tungurahua, or the Black Giant, as it is sometimes known. This volcano had been slumbering peacefully for many years, yet at the time of my visit a good deal of steam had been seen rising from the crater. Such an indication of activity only increased my curiosity to visit it, and goaded me on as I and my companions struggled upward through the tangle of forest which surrounds its base.

At twelve thousand feet all plant life ceased, and we made camp. Next day we tackled the steep cinder slope that led upward to the crater. In a matter of four hours we arrived on the crest, and found ourselves amidst a vast expanse of ice and snow, smothered under layers of ashes. A curious stillness held the frozen world as we crept cautiously over to the crater, a colossal hole bored

deep down into the heart of the world. The great gaping mouth, with a span of three hundred yards, was streaked with purple, and the farther lip was set with jagged rocks, sticking up into the air like so many angry teeth snarling at the heavens. From innumerable holes amidst the ice and snow jets of steam spurted out, and far down in the bottom of the pit we could see the throat of the monster, choked up with tons upon tons of loose rock. To our puny minds Tungurahua the Terrible lay dead at our feet, with the very breath of life strangled out of it.

As we were collecting our rock-samples we were surprised to note increased activity on the part of the steam jets. Along the lip of the crater appeared a whole row of them, which hissed out streaks of whiteness into the air. We were completely baffled by the transformation. For over an hour this continued, the noise growing louder until it became unbearable.

Suddenly the whole mountain trembled, and the rocky mass at the bottom of the crater appeared to rise and fall. Tungurahua awoke—a howling roar thundered out of the bowels of the earth, and then the scenery shot up into the void and disappeared clean over our heads.

Clouds rushed madly into the heart of the disturbance, only to be split by the great column of squirming blackness. Large boulders, too weighty to be hurled clear, fell back into the seething vortex, where they were crunched to a million atoms and flung up into the air again, so much dust to the wind.

For an hour we remained rooted to the spot. To have run would have been suicide. Our only chance of safety lay in keeping close to the seat of action, as then everything passed over our heads. A few large rocks did fall

near us, but we saw them coming and managed to dodge them. Then there was a lull, and we were treated to a deluge of hot mud. We took advantage of this to make for home. Down the mountain-side we hurried, as fast as we could go, and only stopped when we reached our shelter.

We got our rock-specimens all right, but we also got the scare of our lives, which I for one will never forget.

XVIII

ESKIMO

by CAPTAIN H. T. MUNN

EVERY traveller and explorer who has associated with the primitive or semi-primitive Eskimos of the Canadian northland has sung their praises, and the man who failed to like these cheerful, courageous, resourceful little people after he had lived with them and shared their hardships would be a very churlish fellow. After an effort which ended in disaster, my ship being crushed in the ice and foundering in twenty-five minutes off the northern end of Baffin Island, nearly five hundred miles north of the Arctic Circle, I established a small trading company there with which I was intimately connected for ten years. My first trading station was on Bylot Island, twenty-five miles north of Baffin Island, which is the fourth largest island in the world—a thousand miles long and two hundred wide—being one of the great group which comprise Canada's most northerly possessions. The first tribes I met there were semi-primitive—that is to say, although they had abandoned the bow and arrow for the modern rifle, and used the white man's tools and utensils, they still wore their native clothing—sealskin in the summer and caribou skin in the winter—ate only meat or fish, and held to their ancient pagan beliefs, for no missionaries had then been so far north.

Two of the commonest fallacies regarding the Eskimos, which I have often contradicted, are that they smear their

bodies with blubber, and sleep in winter in their fur clothes. Both are ridiculous errors, for, if such were the Eskimo's practice, he would infallibly freeze to death when he encountered the normal winter temperatures—far below zero—in which he lives and hunts for half the year. In his igloo, or snow house, when he turns in for the night, the Eskimo strips himself naked, and his busy little wife, after turning his undergarments and stockings of caribou skin inside out and carefully drying them over the blubber lamp, rolls them into a pillow with her own before snuggling down beside her mate in the same state of nudity. Although the Eskimos in the north of Baffin Island had been in contact with white men for over a hundred years—for in the middle of last century as many as sixty whaling vessels would ply their trade in Davis Straits, and along the east coast of the island—they retained, when I first knew them, most of their old habits and their primitive mode of life.

My first winter journey was made with an Eskimo and his wife across the inlet from my trading station, and about one hundred miles down the coast of Baffin Island. It was in the dark month, December, and bitterly cold. We returned, accompanied by an old man, his wife and a girl of sixteen, with their own sled and dog team. On the third day of our homeward journey it was intensely cold, probably 50° below zero. At the entrance to the inlet my men decided that we could go straight to my station across the new ice, instead of making a detour involving a further thirty miles up the inlet—the route we had followed on the outward journey. We were soon travelling over young black ice, as new sea-ice is called. It was very wet underfoot, and

as it became worse my man walked ahead of the sled, prodding the ice as he went with his lance. If the lance went through by its own weight the ice was unsafe, he explained.. It frequently did go through. Thin sea-ice, unlike fresh-water ice, is very tough, and gives beneath your feet, but at ten miles from shore, with two hundred fathoms of water below you, and a tide running, it is not pleasant to travel over. I, who was green at the game, felt thoroughly scared, for it was soon obvious that the men were beginning to feel anxious. Presently the sled following ours broke through with one runner, and the old woman and the girl were thrown off and fell through the ice. My man ran back and helped to pull them out, but both women were wet to the skin. We got my man's sled on to a firmer piece of ice, and the girl, chattering with cold, came to us. Fortunately my eiderdown canvas-covered blanket was roped along the top of the led. The girl stripped off all her clothes, and I wrapped her in my blanket, naked, and she lay on the top of the sled with the lashings replaced lightly over her. By this time she was numb and quite stupefied. I thought she would probably die there, so cold was her body. The next half-hour was a horrible nightmare. At any time I could press my toe through the soft ice. "Two hundred fathoms and a tide running" sang in my brain as I shuffled along, with my legs wide apart, imitating the others. The woman kept moaning "I am afraid, I am afraid", and sobbed as she walked. The night was dark, moonless and still. Overhead myriads of stars glittered coldly in the indigo sky. At last we saw in the dim darkness the white, snow-covered, firm ice we had so rashly left, which meant safety, but between us and it was a

lane of such thin ice that we could not cross it. Following it for what seemed an age, my man presently called a halt, and felt his way gingerly over it until he stood on firm ice. I followed him, shuffling along as he had done, with feet wide apart, and reached him safely. He then explained that when he called the dogs they would bring the sled with a run, and I must stand on the firm ice and seize it, since it would be certain to break through as it reached the thicker ice. He moved off and began to call: "Aie! Aie! Nanoo, nanoo!" ("Look! look! a bear, a bear!") and the dogs replied with yelps and howls. A boy who was returning with us started the sled, and as it approached me over the thin ice it was preceded by a considerable wave, looking in the darkness exactly as if it were water. The sled hit the firm ice with a bump, the tail end sunk through on the impact, and I seized the fore end and hung on like grim death, while the dogs strained to get to their master, who was still shouting "A bear! a bear!" from somewhere out in the darkness. The boy and the woman shuffled across at another place, and the three of us managed to hold the sled from slipping back, and finally, with the help of the dogs, hauled it up to safety on the sound ice. I had been afraid the girl would roll off, but as she made no sound I thought she was dead. I undid the lashings and took a look at her under my blanket, and to my amazement she was sound asleep. I passed my hand over her recently ice-cold body, and she was warm. It seemed incredible that this glowingly warm, sleeping girl could be the same person as the frozen, benumbed, stupefied creature whom I had lashed on to the sled half an hour earlier.

We reached my station at three in the morning, and

I thankfully turned in for some sleep. At eleven or so my man came and called me outside. We walked over to the high bank, a quarter of a mile from my house, and he pointed across the water, to the scene of our night's travel. All the black young ice on which we had spent so many anxious hours had disappeared, and with my glass I could see the little waves lapping against the thick snow-covered ice where we had found safety. My man laughed heartily. "We were just in time," he said cheerfully; "while you slept, all the new ice went out as the wind got up." To an Eskimo a miss is always as good as a mile.

In the early summer of one year I took a boy named Panig-pah and his young wife, In-noya, about one hundred and twenty miles down the coast, across the sea-ice, to drive my dog sled, and make my camp comfortable. Only a very exceptional white man can make such a journey without native help. I cannot. The snow had melted off the ice, the dogs were well fed, strong and eager, and we would pitch our little tent early at night, in the bright light of the midnight sun. Then the boy would go off to stalk a seal hauled out on the ice and asleep, while the girl and I would go to the open water at the ice-edge and wait for an incautious seal to put up his head, or shoot edible sea-birds with my .22 rifle. Sometimes a great Greenland whale would be seen blowing far out to sea, or a school of white whales would pass, making a soft "pough, pough" as they blew. Gulls and kittiwakes wheeled and screamed in the brilliant sunshine, and the snow-covered mountains behind my trading station, seventy or eighty miles away, looked incredibly near in the soft, clear air of the Arctic summer.

So enjoyable was the journey under these conditions that we loitered longer than we should have done. By the time we returned the ice was becoming very wet, great cracks running in towards the land forced us to make long detours, and my boy urged the dogs to greater efforts, so that we might get back to the trading station before the ice went out. I trusted entirely to his judgment as to whether the inlet we had to cross to reach the station would be safe. In-noya expressed her doubts, but the boy laughed at them.

We arrived within four miles of my station to find open water between us and the shore. Nor was this the worst. The cracks in the sea-ice had been increasing all day, and after reaching the nearest possible point to the land my boy, who had climbed a small hummock, gave a cry of alarm. "See, see!" he called out; "the ice has broken behind us, and we are adrift!"

I fired several signal shots, and presently, through my Ross telescope, I could see a few people struggling with a heavy whale boat which had been hauled up on the land for winter. I gave the glass to In-noya. "All women", she said briefly; "the men are away, far up the inlet, hunting narwhal." A wide lane of water now separated us from the landfast ice over which we had come, and under the fierce summer sun the ice was rapidly disintegrating. I realized too late that my boy had gambled on somebody seeing us as we approached, and putting off a boat to fetch us. On this assumption he had gone to the farthest edge of the ice, which was—as it proved—an extremely rash thing to do. Two hours passed, and the little party were still struggling with the boat across the shore-ice. Only with immense efforts were they able to move it at

all. We were within fifteen miles of where I had lost my ship on my first Arctic voyage, and near the scene of the December sled-journey which I have just described. The old superstition—"Look out for the third accident, for it is always the worst" drummed in my head insistently, and in spite of the hot sunshine the water looked cold, and lonely, and deep. Panig-pah flung himself down on the sled and wept bitterly, saying over and over again, "We are dead, we are dead!"—but In-noya was of stouter stuff, and did not utter a whimper, but kept her dark eyes steadily fixed on the struggling party with the boat. Presently I handed her the telescope. "The boat is in the water", I said, "and they are getting out the oars." She looked quietly round before using the glass. "They must be quick", she said; "the ice will not last much longer." It would be an hour's row at least, and minute by minute it seemed that our floe was getting smaller and disintegrating more rapidly, the water lapping farther and farther over the edges.

It was one of the longest hours I ever spent. Panig-pah lay face downwards on the sled, but In-noya stood sturdily on her feet, never taking her dark eyes off the distant boat. At last it reached us, and by that time the ice was so rotten that we had to take the greatest care lest it should collapse and fling us all into the water as they came alongside. The boat was manned by five women. One was In-noya's gallant old mother, who had fiercely urged the others on to make their immense effort; another was an old and feeble woman, and a third was a young woman, who gave birth to a healthy baby twenty-four hours after our rescue. I afterwards followed the track of the heavy boat which this feeble crew had hauled

over the soft shore-ice, and marvelled how they had managed to move it at all. A few hours after we landed the ice had disappeared for eight or ten miles out from the shore.

When some of the men returned next day from their hunting they rated Panig-pah soundly for going out on such rotten ice, but he only laughed heartily. I reminded him that he had wept the day before, on the ice-floe. He agreed cheerfully, saying simply: "Yes, of course, but I was very frightened then!"

Some years later merry little Panig-pah again gambled with fate—and lost. He and his wife starved to death some two hundred and fifty miles west of my trading station.

The Eskimos are, I fear, a doomed race. The march of our so-called civilization is proving too much for them. All the vast littoral of the Canadian Arctic—their home for untold centuries—now contains less than seven thousand natives. In the 'eighties some four thousand Eskimos had their home to the east and west of the Mackenzie River delta. American whaling ships brought them three deadly gifts—white men's clothing, white men's food, and white men's diseases, until they were practically exterminated. The surviving remnant are a civilized, spoilt, uninteresting people.

The Canadian Government are making desperate efforts to save the more primitive Eskimos farther to the eastward. Three thousand reindeer have been driven from Alaska to the Mackenzie River delta—the largest trek of domestic animals in the world's history, the drive being over two mountain ranges, and taking three years to reach the Alaskan boundary, while it was five years

before the final delivery was made at the place agreed on west of the Mackenzie delta. Doctors and small hospitals have been provided in the Arctic for the needs of the Eskimo, and every effort is at last being made to preserve at least some of these, the most valuable aborigines on the North American continent, for without them the immense resources of Canada's vast Arctic lands can never be adequately developed. The future of the Eskimos—if they have one—lies in the ownership of herds of reindeer, as they have developed them in Alaska, which will supply the Arctic mining camps of the future with meat, clothe their owners, and make them independent of white traders and others. But the happy, faithful, gallant little nomads I knew and liked so well will have vanished for ever.

XIX

NORTHERN VOYAGE

by ISOBEL W. HUTCHISON

THE southern shores of Alaska have been called "The Graveyard of the Pacific", but the frozen coast of Arctic Alaska, from Bering Strait northwards to Point Barrow—the extreme tip of this vast territory—is even more dangerous to navigators. Apart from the ever-present dread of the shifting ice-pack, there is a long line of shoals (many of them still uncharted) which hedge the flat coast, and extend eastward along the low fringe of the Beaufort Sea to Demarcation Point and Arctic Canada. Needless to say, no tourist vessels pass this way. The only large ships which penetrate this ice-wrapt region during the brief summer can be numbered on the fingers of one hand. The United States revenue cutter makes an annual coastal inspection as far as Barrow village, but very seldom penetrates farther east to Demarcation. This five-hundred-mile strip of United States territory fronting the Pole is an icy wilderness at the back of the Endicott Mountains, inhabited only by a few Eskimo families and one or two white traders.

My summer had been spent on the Yukon at Klondike, and then in Alaska, on the Seward peninsula, around the old gold-mining town of Nome (recently destroyed by fire), collecting flowers for the Royal Herbarium of Kew and curios for the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge. Before leaving London I had

arranged to be picked up at Barrow about mid-July by the Hudson's Bay Company's supply ship *Anyox*, and taken from there to Herschel Island, where there is an outpost of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, about one hundred and fifty miles from the Arctic terminus of the Canadian Airways at Aklavik, in the Mackenzie River delta. But 1933 was one of the worst ice-years round Barrow within memory. The *Anyox* was caught and badly damaged by the ice while proceeding through Bering Strait, and obliged to return south with all stores. In these circumstances I found it almost impossible to get a passage to Barrow. Only one chance remained. Mr. Ira Rank, a Nome merchant, traded annually up this little-known coast as far as Barrow with his ten-ton motor schooner *Trader* and a crew of two Icelanders, the brothers Pete and Kari Palsson, captain and engineer. *Trader* called at unfrequented villages on this desolate coast, offering excellent chances for the collection of curios, and the few remaining flowers of the brief summer, and Mr. Rank was willing to take a passenger. True, I had to share the galley with the owner, and the deck was so close above my bunk that had I sat up suddenly a black eye would certainly have been the result! What matter? The locker under me rattled with all the canned delicacies of Chicago. I dreamed above grape-fruit and sweet-corn, lobster and bully-beef, whilst on deck were bales of apples, oranges, even rose-red water-melon! For such delicacies did *Trader* carry with her into the Arctic, to meet the increasing requirements of her Eskimo customers, once satisfied with blubber and a walrus-hide drum, now critical of the various styles in radios, piano-concertinas, gramophones, chew-

ing-gum or silk stockings. Tobacco, however, is always the first demand.

"I wonder", said Kari, as we slipped out into the northern mists, "if we shall see the *Baychimo* this year?"

The *Baychimo*, the Hudson's Bay Company's fine vessel, went adrift in 1931, whilst wintering in the ice, which had caught her off Wainwright, an Eskimo village about one hundred miles south of Barrow. She is the phantom-ship of the Beaufort Sea. Since she broke anchor and drifted out to Bering Strait under a winter gale the ghostly derelict has only twice been boarded. On the first occasion her valuable cargo of furs was retrieved. Our chance of meeting the *Baychimo* was one in a thousand, but luck was with us, and that thousandth chance came up on top! "The *Baychimo*'s out there in the ice, fifteen miles off shore! Can you reach her, boys?"

This startling intelligence greeted us when, after a rough battle against wind and tide, we had just dropped anchor opposite the straggling village of Wainwright.

Could we? That was the question; though without a doubt we were going to try! The *Trader*'s anchor was lifted again immediately, and we were off on the perilous track of the derelict, whose faint black hull could be dimly descried as we approached the ice-pack. Nearer she loomed and nearer, lifted high, on an ice-pan, to within a few feet of her keel. Nearer yet, with anxious eyes watching the wind, for a change to eastward might well spell disaster for the little *Trader* and trap her in the outward-drifting pack. Could we make it? At first sight our task seemed impossible; the floes were so large and dense, our vessel so small. At last, when success seemed all but hopeless, Kari spied a "lead" in the

direction of the very floe on which *Baychimo* was poised, her huge rusted hull towering above our little schooner.

A strange spectacle the vessel presented when at last, after an exciting clamber up a broken ladder, she was boarded. The hold was open to the winds, and its varied contents strewed the decks—furs, papers, books, typewriters, mineral ore, charts and flags from the Captain's deckhouse, and—as if to lend colour to the piratical nature of the scene—a pair of rusted handcuffs (once doubtless the property of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) decorated a hatch!

The *Trader* was of course far too small a vessel to attempt to salvage the *Baychimo*, though Kari pronounced her engines to be in excellent condition. Recalled at midnight by rising wind and gathering fog, we threaded our perilous way out again through the ice, our laden decks almost level with the water.

Whether or not the *Baychimo* resented our intrusion I will leave to the superstitious to decide, but shortly after boarding her the *Trader* was caught and held by the ice for fifteen days amid the dangerous shoals. Our last glimpse of the derelict was in a mirage, far on the edge of the glittering ice-pack in which we were entrapped. She appeared to be riding upside down in a gauzy haze, and was steering slowly and surely with the current past the shoals that had entangled us. "It looks", said Pete, watching her enviously through the glasses, "as if a master-hand were at her wheel!"

When at last we reached Barrow on September 2nd it was too late for the *Trader* to attempt the voyage to Herschel Island before the freeze-up, which was almost upon us. Running a considerable risk of being frozen in

on the Beaufort Sea, I continued my journey into Canada on another small trading-schooner owned by an Estonian trader, August Masik, who had been a member of the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1918. With some difficulty we reached his lonely trading-post on an island some seventy miles from the Canadian border. Here the freeze-up overtook us, and not till six weeks later was it safe to pursue my journey by dog-team along this desolate fringe of the world, past Demarcation boundary to Herschel Island.

August Masik acted as my guide with his own sled (the only one procurable) and his team of four fine dogs, Joe, Billy, Whitie and Dick. The journey to Herschel took us five days. On the third morning we reached the desolate little granite obelisk on the rim of the snow-wrapt Polar Sea which marks the boundary between lawless Alaska and the orderly domain of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I was once more under the protection of the Union Jack, on British territory, and despite the wildness of the scene around me, I felt an added security.

"I'll bet", said August Masik, "that you're the first white woman that ever entered Canada past that boundary-stone! You've escaped all the customs duties up here!"

That same evening we were overtaken on the bleak sea-ice not far from the boundary-stone by darkness and a rising wind. I was sitting shivering over the Primus stove in my small tent when my guide entered. As he did so a gust of wind nearly carried away the fragile bamboo poles.

"This thing's just a toy", he said. "Guess I'll need to

buckle to and build a snow-house." He sighed wearily, for our day had been a heavy one. For a long time I sat watching the slowly cooking rice. At last he pushed the tent-flap aside and peered into the darkness. "Well, are you going to stay in the tent and blow away, or do you want to share my house?"

I went out into the blowing night. Banners of green light were threading in and out across the clear starlit sky, their weird tentacles clutching now here, now there. Low in the west hung a splinter of moon. Amid the snow and icebergs that littered the sea rose the fairy-like dome of a snow-house; a light from within glimmering through its walls till they shone like the hood of a daffodil in sunshine. Crawling on hands and knees through the low doorway I found myself in a tiny crystal chamber, its walls, floor and roof shining like diamonds in the light of a candle frozen into the floor. My choice was easily made. "I'll share yours!"

Soon our sleeping-bags were spread comfortably on the icy floor, and supper was cooked again, safe from the winds, within its solid shelter.

At Herschel there is a lonely outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. As my guide and I drove up two mornings later a group of men came out to meet me.

"Miss Hutchison, I suppose?" said the police officer, stepping forward with outstretched hand.

"However did you know?" I asked.

"Guess you've been wanted by the police for nearly two months", was the reply. "We heard that you had left Barrow, but we didn't figure you'd get along now before next summer!"

Some weeks later, with another guide and dogs, I reached the little Arctic village of Aklavik in the MacKenzie delta. It had taken me half a year to climb into the Arctic. A plane of the Canadian Airways returned me to civilization, fifteen hundred miles down the frozen Mackenzie, to Edmonton, in three and a half days.

But I had heard the call of the wild on starlit nights under the Northern lights, I had slept in a snow-house, I had broken a new trail at the foot of the splintered Endicotts, and my heart still throbbed for the wilderness!

XX

TRAVELLING WITH RED INDIANS

by H. SALMON

SOME years ago I found myself at a fur-trading post on the edge of the tree belt bounding the Arctic region. There were still visible the remnants of a stout stockade, a reminder of those grim days when warlike tribes waged a guerrilla warfare upon the white intruder. My customers consisted only of Indians and Eskimos.

Nowadays the North American Indians are divided into two distinct classes: those who live under civilized conditions on Government preserves and those who continue to lead an independent existence in the interior.

Every year in the summer months, the supply ship grinds its way through the ice-fields, carrying supplies and mail to posts on the Arctic and sub-Arctic seaboard, while inland the Indians wait for the break-up of the river-ice, when they leap into their canoes and follow behind the ice as it crashes its way down to the sea.

When the natives arrive at the main post they collect food supplies and trade goods, and transport them back to their own post inland—not an easy thing to do, when thirty-eight tons of freight have to be shifted by canoe, against the stream, over a distance of three hundred miles. A colleague of mine who arrived one day with such a party had my entire sympathy, as they were a particularly difficult crowd to handle. But my feelings towards him changed slightly when he suddenly fell ill, and I was forced to take his place on the return journey.

And so, a few days later, I found myself setting out with some two hundred and fifty Redskins on the six weeks' return journey to the Arctic. To assist me in my unenviable task I was accompanied by an alleged interpreter, as my own Indian vocabulary was confined to a few short sentences of a pithy and provocative nature. I said an alleged interpreter, for I was taken aback to find that the worthy fellow knew no more English than I knew Indian; so you can imagine that our conversation was not particularly illuminating!

I found the Indians were powerful paddlers, and with eight men in a canoe they made steady progress, even against a stiff current. The freight consisted of bags of flour and sugar, cases of lard, tea and biscuits, and bales of trade goods; but as we had only a limited number of canoes the method followed was to travel, say, ten miles up river with part of the supplies, make a "cache" or temporary store, and go back for more, making four trips in all.

As we progressed farther inland dense woods came down to the water's edge, backed by towering mountain ranges—a magnificent panorama after the desolate open country on the coast, and as the sun set the Indians would steal away from their encampment in single-seater birch-bark canoes, to fish or hunt the game which abounded in the woods—arctic hare, snowshoe rabbit, ptarmigan, porcupine, and occasionally black bear or deer.

Everything seemed to be going according to plan, when, only a few days after leaving my post, friction started between the two tribes which composed the party. At the time my tent was pitched on a bluff overlooking

the river, and in the early morning I was waked up by the sound of raucous voices raised in heated altercation.—By the way, an Indian's voice is at the best of times unpleasantly obtrusive, and in moments of excitement and stress becomes positively distressing.—I leapt from my sleeping-bag, and was amazed to see below me, on the river's edge, a number of Indians engaged in a first-class brawl. As a spectacle it was unique, but as a start to the day's work it was not so good. The average Indian will spread his resentment indiscriminately, knowing full well that should he concentrate on any particular adversary several enterprising warriors will most certainly jump on him, which is apt to be a little disconcerting when you take into account the peculiar methods of attack adopted. Anyhow, I did not want any natives injured to the extent of being unable to work, so there was nothing for it but to wade in and hit out at all and sundry. After a hectic few minutes of unclamping jaws from ears and fishing dejected fighters out of the water, comparative peace was restored, and the dissenting parties were despatched on the day's freighting in different directions.

It was not long before I discovered that this was no isolated instance of pure animal spirits, for scarcely a day passed without a brawl of some sort. So during this time life had few dull moments.

As we advanced, the river became narrower and swifter, and rapids abounded. This meant that the freight had to be disembarked and carried—the canoes as well, of course—to a point above the rapids, where everything was repacked until we came to the next rapid, when the same tedious process was repeated.

One day, as the canoes were being pushed through the shallow water, a black bear ambled out of the woods on to a near-by promontory. The effect on the Indians was electric: as one man they dropped poles and paddles and waded ashore, many of them with no more lethal weapon than a shot-gun. Unfortunately the bear refused to enter into the spirit of the game, and departed at speed into the middle distance; which, one must admit, indicated a wise discretion on his part.

One of the Indians distinguished himself a day or so later, for while punting the canoe and joking with the steersman he fell overboard. Incidentally, and oddly enough, the average Indian has not the vaguest notion how to swim. However, he was fortunate, for after much threshing and flailing he reached the bank, where he rolled himself in his blankets and refused to move till the following day.

In spite of continual setbacks, and disaffection amongst the natives, we finally passed the half-way mark, after being held up for two days by a strike which was organized with the intention of forcing higher wages. You can have no idea how maddening it is to be unable to express oneself fluently in such circumstances. All I could do was to splutter like a damp squib. I stopped all food rations, and on this they soon decided that their wages were not so bad after all.

And so, after many trials, we reached the falls, which came just before the last long stretch of portage. A year or two earlier a canoe had been carried over these falls, and its occupants dashed to pieces, so this time, to prevent this from happening again, the canoes were carried farther up stream before being refloated. Then

came the last and worst rapids. Pine-clad hills rose steeply before us, and the river roared, twisting through a narrow canyon five miles in length. This particular portage took two weeks, though this, as you will hear, was not entirely due to the difficulties of the passage.

My interpreter came to me one afternoon, saying that he had known for the past fortnight that certain of the Indians had been opening cases of trade goods and stealing various articles, but he had not dared tell me, as he was afraid of making the Indians angry. I realized that unless I acted immediately all discipline would go by the board, so I sent for the ringleaders to come to my tent. The natives admitted their thefts, but flatly refused to return the articles in question. The argument eventually became extremely heated. The noise brought the rest of the Indians out of their tents, and they proceeded to form a hostile mob behind the culprits. Unfortunately the interpreter got into a panic, retired into my tent, and refused to move. I then had to tell the Indians as best I could that all food rations and pay would be stopped until everything was returned. The natives did not take a very favourable view of my suggestion, but adopted a threatening attitude. The spokesman gave me to understand—and even with my imperfect knowledge of the language it was easy to follow him—that they intended to drop me in the rapids and then make off with the freight and canoes.

I am the most reasonable person in the world, and am always ready to fall in with any sensible suggestion, but in this particular case I could not see eye to eye with the natives. There was only one thing to do, and that was to call their bluff, so I stationed myself in front

of the freight cache and told them to go ahead. Luckily for me the Red Indian is a clannish creature, and no one seemed ready to take the initiative and open the attack, so they gradually dispersed, muttering vengeance. A few hours later my wretched interpreter was so badly manhandled that large portions of skin were removed from his back; but it was his back and not mine, and all's well that ends well. For three days I was constantly on the watch, but no further trouble developed, and the Indians gradually returned to their work.

Shortly after this incident one of the ringleaders developed mumps—of all diseases! He had a face swollen up like a bull-pup's, and since he regarded the disease as being a visitation from heaven in punishment of his misdemeanours, I was saved further trouble.

All the same, I was only too glad to hand over the reins of office a few days later to another post manager. The journey back to the main post was uneventful, except that on passing through the five-mile rapids the Indian in the bows of the canoe became unnerved and tried to deflect it towards the wall of the canyon, which rose sheer above us. This would have meant that we should all have been thrown into the churning water. However, I managed effectually to put him out of action by a shrewd buffet on his thick skull with the blade of my paddle.

After my experiences, you must not mention the word "Indians" to me—the mere name rouses me to a frenzy.

THE NATURALIST

XXI

ENCOUNTERS WITH WILD ANIMALS

by CHERRY KEARTON

IN April 1892, I took my first photograph of a bird's nest, and thus became a pioneer of nature photography; but I little dreamt then what adventures my hobby would lead me into as the years rolled on; and when I look back upon all that has happened, I sometimes wonder if I am really alive, or merely dreaming it over again.

In those early days I slept in old ruins, descended beetling cliffs, swam to isolated rocks, waded rivers, climbed lofty trees, tramped many weary miles, spent nights in the open on lonely moors, and endured the pangs of hunger and thirst, and the stings of insects, while I waited for days together to secure a single picture—yet such was the fascination of my work that I suffered all these hardships with cheerfulness.

My first big thrill came when I attempted to photograph the cliff-breeding birds in the British Isles by swinging on the end of a rope with a camera on my back, and a drop of six hundred feet into a raging sea.

Before I started on my world travels I had photographed nearly all the birds and animals in the British Isles, making both "stills" and moving pictures.

I had other experiences also, apart from nature photography, for in May 1908 I took the first aerial films over London. I had known the famous Spencer brothers for some years, during which time I had made frequent ascents in their balloons.

One day they showed me a new craft which they had built: a dirigible—or airship—which was to be the first to fly over London, and on its way was to encircle St. Paul's Cathedral. I arranged to accompany them.

The dirigible was a frail craft, consisting of a cigar-shaped gas-bag, and suspended beneath it by a slender rigging was the gondola, a very flimsy affair, consisting of three bamboo poles belted together in an inverted V-shape, with a basket in the centre, and a five-horse-power engine with an open exhaust and a canvas-covered propeller.

As the gas-bag was filling near some gas-works on the outskirts of London I had little opportunity of thinking about any of the dangers ahead, for I was too busy with my camera, securely tying it to the basket and bamboo poles, and afterwards taking pictures of the surrounding crowd.

When we had the full complement of gas I heard Spencer give the order to let go, and immediately afterwards I saw the earth dropping away from us.

The first thrill came at once, for we appeared to be crashing headlong into a building, but the airship answered her helm, and we cleared the roof with a few feet to spare; then up we went rapidly, heading straight for London. I saw the Thames like a silver snake beneath me, the roofs of houses like postage stamps, and tiny dark spots flitting about, which proved to be people. Soon we were between three and four thousand feet up, and then the engine began to back-fire, and I noticed that the propeller was revolving much more slowly than it had done at the start.

Suddenly a squall struck us, and the ship heeled over,

canted to one side, seemed about to turn round, and just as suddenly decided not to do so. One moment the nose pointed upwards, and the next, downwards, as though we were on the point of taking a header to earth.

It seemed as though we were threatened with an undignified descent on to London's roofs; but Spencer let go several sand-bags, and we rose with extraordinary swiftness, London quickly disappeared from view, and we became enveloped in clouds.

It was a queer experience to feel oneself floating in the clouds with no sight of the earth below, and for a moment my original doubts of the strength of the cords and bamboo poles returned. But my attention was very soon distracted by the engine, from the depths of which came a series of terrifying explosions. At the same time there was a strong smell of gas, some of it having been released in order to counteract our sudden rise.

Then came a bang, and I thought the whole outfit was blowing up, so I shut my eyes, expecting to find myself hurtling through space. Nothing happened, so I opened them. Strangely enough, the basket was still around me, the frail bamboo poles still stretched ahead and astern, and even the gas-bag floated serenely above me. But there was one great difference, for complete silence reigned, thanks to the comforting fact that the engine had decided to stop!

My eyes followed the direction of Spencer's, and I saw what had happened: the pipe that led from the petrol tank to the engine had broken. As we were not equipped for repairs our engine was now useless, and we were as helpless as a non-dirigible balloon.

It had been bad enough to smell escaping gas, but

when I saw the broken petrol pipe I expected immediate disaster, for by all the rules of aeronautics and motoring we ought to have gone up in a sheet of flame, and why we did not I have never found out to this day.

But although we had escaped that disaster, our situation was still very unpleasant, for we had been climbing all the time, and had now reached a height of fourteen thousand feet.

My nose was bleeding, and I felt a hammering as of piston-rods in my ears, but since the control of our destiny was not in my hands I pulled myself together, and began to take some more photographs.

We had risen above the cloud-bank, and were now moving steadily along a few hundred feet above it. The sun was shining down on it, transforming the clouds into beautiful white shapes.

Then we suddenly found ourselves turning round and round in a sort of whirlpool, and it was then that I saw the airship's shadow on the banked-up clouds surrounding us, creating a lovely and unusual picture, at which I directed my camera, obtaining a most successful film, despite the difficulties of nose-bleeding; and when the film was shown on the screen the shadow of the airship, with my hand turning the handle of the camera, was distinctly visible.

Sometimes the airship floated steadily, and then swung giddily round and round, as if waltzing to some crazy orchestra.

For a moment we hung uncertainly—and then we dropped—straight through the clouds—down, down—and I had a sensation like that of the nightmare in which one falls headlong over a cliff that never ends.

But in a very short time we had passed through the clouds, and the earth came into view. I remember a feeling of relief upon seeing that we were no longer over London. I brought the camera into play again, and photographed the dreadful, solid-looking ground as it seemed to rush up to meet us. Trees and houses became recognizable, and then I felt a terrible jar, which shook every bone in my body, as the nose of the framework hit the ground, twisting the tubing of the propeller and burying it in the earth. Bamboo poles broke and splintered, and we were thrown off our feet, falling into a chaotic pile of tubing, pipes, rope and gas-bag, from which we scrambled out unhurt.

I had taken the first film from the air, crashed and escaped alive, and I showed the record of our experiences on the screen to the people of London on the following day.

Since those early adventures I have produced many films, published thirty-five books, and travelled all over the world, photographing every kind of dangerous beast, and as a result I have had my share of adventures with elephants, lions, rhinos, tigers and snakes.

I remember an occasion, on one of my expeditions to Africa, when we had just camped near the Abyssinian border. Leaving my companions, I went for a stroll with my camera-bearer. Rounding a corner, I suddenly came upon five lions, devouring a kill about two hundred yards away. I sent the boy back to tell my companions, and waited.

Unfortunately the lions had killed only a small buck, which they finished much sooner than I had expected.

A big lioness looked at me, and then began to advance, whilst the others stood watching.

I then remembered that I had noticed a native's skull in the pathway some fifteen minutes before we made camp, and as the native had been dead only a couple of days I knew that there must be a man-eater in the district.

As the lioness continued to advance this knowledge did not make me feel too comfortable, so I quickly made up my mind what to do, and dropped in the grass. Peeping up, I saw that she had stopped and was looking back at the others, as if inviting them to follow, which they did. So I sprang up like a jack-in-the-box, and they all stopped. Once more I dropped, but this time I moved quickly backwards on all fours in the grass. This was repeated four times, until they got within sixty yards of me, when I heard the welcome sound of voices—my companions! We advanced, but now there was not a sign of the lions; they had completely disappeared.

It was in Borneo that I had one unforgettable experience with a snake, when I was photographing the great horn-bill feeding his mate, whom he had barred in a hollow tree.

While hiding under a thin green cloth, and sitting with my knees up to my chin, I was horrified to see a big snake enter my tent, and slowly glide towards the arch made by my knees. I knew that my only chance was to keep absolutely still, so I sat there with the perspiration trickling down my face, wondering if I should escape with my life.

I sat motionless, as if carved out of wood. The snake had already moved forward, so that its head was out

of sight under my knees, and when it came into sight again it stopped for a second, looked at me, and then glided on its way. It was a deadly species, about five feet in length, and by the time it had disappeared from beneath that tent I could have sworn that it was fifty feet long.

When Shakespeare said "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players", he did not take into account the world of Nature, which is a vaster stage than that we humans act upon; a theatre without artifice, in which the animals play the greatest dramas and comedies ever devised; and I am proud to have been a spectator at their magnificent continuous performance, during which I have lived as dangerously as do the untamed members of Nature's cast, who have been kind enough to let me return in safety, perhaps because I have always made a point of being kind to them.

XXII

BIG GAME

by MAJOR A. RADCLYFFE DUGMORE

WHEN I was a very small boy—and that is a terribly long time ago, much more than half a century—my elder brother and I used to spend many hours making plans for our future. We were to be great explorers, travelling to the unknown parts of the world in fantastic boats designed rather on the lines of the old Viking craft. We made endless drawings of our ships-to-be; islands were to be conquered, and we to be made kings of strange tribes. Most imaginative boys do something of this sort, but usually school life and practical parents upset all their marvellous plans. In our case, however, though neither of us became a great explorer, fate ordained that we should lead rather unusual lives, much of our time being spent in out-of-the-way places. For some years my brother ruled a part of what was then, in the early 'nineties, wild Africa; but that was as near as either of us came to being the kings of our early dreams.

When my father retired from the army, he decided to buy a yacht and take us abroad, for he believed that travel was the best form of education. So it was that in 1883 we all left the thousand-year-old castle in Ireland, and with two maids, a governess, and a small crew, embarked on what was destined to be the turning-point of my life.

After a few months of cruising in home waters we paid

a visit to Africa. What a thrill there was in the very name! It was the Dark Continent in those days, when most of the interior was unknown. At that time the Riff pirates still existed, though they had been almost completely suppressed after their many years of piratical activities. Now it happened that there were some of these rascals in the vicinity of Tangier, and when we anchored in the Bay they cast covetous eyes on our trim little sailing yacht. Apparently they studied our habits and discovered that the hour of least activity on board was about eight in the evening, for then we were at dinner, and the anchor watch was not yet posted. This, then, was to be their opportunity, and one dark night in January they made the attempt to get us. Had they succeeded in boarding the yacht it would have been easy to batten down the hatches and slip the cable, and so get away. And that would probably have been the end of the Dugmore family. But fortune was kind to us. By chance our skipper was on deck, having a quiet smoke, when he saw three boats coming towards us, rowing with muffled oars. He scented danger and called my father, who promptly came on deck and fired a shot at each boat, with the result that their crews, who had relied on surprising us, lost no time in getting away as fast as they could, after flashing signals from one boat to the other. Needless to say, this was thrilling to me, for I was but thirteen years old. I only wished that the pirates had actually come on board and given us a real fight.

I cannot relate all our various adventures of the following years, during which the yacht was our home. But in 1888 my father, who was a somewhat erratic person, and had been away for several months, taking part in

one of the South African wars, returned, and decided that he and I should sail to Florida, and go in for orange-growing. I was instructed to equip the yacht without delay; she was moored at the time in the harbour of Castellammare, in the Bay of Naples. Having recently been through a cholera epidemic, the thought of leaving Italy and crossing the great Atlantic was a relief, and more than thrilling, especially as I was to be sailing master.

If we were to catch the Trade winds there was no time to lose, so I quickly got the vessel ready, and with a crew of four Italians we set sail just after Christmas, 1888. To me it was of course a real and very great adventure, for the yacht was small, only fourteen feet beam.

Thus began a new life for me, with the result that I got bitten by the wanderlust, which still possesses me. Our trip was strangely and disappointingly uneventful—twenty-eight days from Madeira to Jamaica. There I took over the navigation, although I knew very little about it. That I got lost on several occasions is not to be wondered at.

In the course of our wandering about Central America we became involved in a comic rebellion off the coast of Spanish Honduras, but although this was a comical experience it was also rather serious, as we were under fire one whole night. However, we got off without a scratch. Shots, both round cannon ball of ancient vintage and bullets, came very close to us, but the old saying that a miss is as good as a mile was as true as ever, even in Honduras.

After a few other adventures we finally reached Florida, and finding the prospects of orange-growing less attractive than we expected, the idea was abandoned. A

little later I decided to start off on my own, and see something of the world. That I had no money was only a detail. The years went by with varying luck, good and bad, and it was not until 1909 that I made a real start on my career of foolishness.

Having always been interested in wild animals, I went off to what was then British East Africa, to photograph big game. It was a new form of sport in those days, and this was the first of my many interesting trips into Africa and other countries.

“Living Dangerously” is the title of this book, but danger is purely a matter of comparison. What one person may consider risky another would laugh at. I confess that at times danger has knocked at my door with unpleasant insistence. However, I am still alive and kicking. Merely, some of my friends suggest, because I was born to be hanged!

Some people say that the photographing of big game is not a dangerous form of sport. It may seem safe enough to those who sit at home, but when a very irate two-ton rhino charges you at full speed, and you have to stand calmly focussing the camera at the oncoming mountain of ill-temper, it really does include some of the elements of danger, and might even be considered reasonably exciting. To have been told that it is quite easy to dodge a charging rhino if only you stand still until the brute is within four or five feet of you ought to be consoling, but it does not really help you very much. After all, the advice *may* be wrong, and anyhow, the standing still—well, it is not easy. Try it and see for yourselves. If you do not happen to have a pet rhino handy a charging bull will do almost as well. The actual dodging is simple enough; I

have tried it, and I know. In fact, if you like that sort of exercise it is quite a delightful amusement, provided, of course, you have a cool head and are very quick on your feet. For my own part, I am not enthusiastic about it; I have been charged too many times. Still, I have secured some very interesting photographs, so it has been worth while.

“Dangerous living” reminds one of lions, which have furnished me with some excitement. One night, for example, I crawled out of my blind, or hiding-place, and nearly walked into a lion’s mouth. Incidentally, I may remark that the lion died very suddenly.

Perhaps the most exciting event of my photographic career was when a fine African elephant spent fifteen minutes standing over me. The experience was none of my seeking; it just happened.

Very briefly, this is the story: I was in a hiding-place behind a screen of branches, with no concealment from the back, because, being an optimist, I believed that the elephants, if they came to be filmed, would approach from the front. After two days of waiting I was surprised one afternoon to see a herd of about a dozen making their way, very slowly, and with every evidence of suspicion, directly towards me—and they were coming from behind, headed by a large cow and her calf. Their great ears were spread out to catch any suspicious sound, and their trunks upraised to detect any hostile scent. If I had had any sense I could have got away; stupidly I stayed. Nearer and nearer the mighty beasts came, and I got closer and closer to the ground, until I was lying flat. Fortunately I was, as usual, alone. Try to picture the scene and put yourselves in my place. All about me

was the great African forest. The mighty trees were so high and so densely covered with rich foliage that they made a barrier between the sky and the ground, so that the light about me was dim and mysterious. Only in front of my hiding-place in the open glade was the sun shining in all the glory of its tropical power. It was into this sunlit glade that the elephants should have come, but, as I said, they approached from behind, where the lower growth of foliage partly hid their great grey bodies from my view. Above the dark green leaves their backs and heads loomed up with terrifying clearness. Think of me having to watch this mass of potential trouble moving slowly forward! Retreat was impossible; the least move on my part would have revealed my presence, and then anything might have happened. To shoot might have proved disastrous—and anyhow, I do not believe I could ever bring myself to kill an elephant. So I simply had to stay where I was and hope for the best. It was not a case of courage on my part, I can assure you. Never have I been in such a condition of pure funk. No, there was no question of courage; I just had to stay. If wishes had been horses, I should have been many, many miles away from those elephants. The cow came on with the relentlessness of death, growing larger and larger and ever more terrifying. My heart beat so loudly that I thought she must hear it. When at last she stopped her fore-feet were within reach of my hands. Her trunk, waving about like a huge snake, was over my head, and her great ears actually fanned me—and I needed fanning, I assure you!

For fifteen minutes—very long minutes they were, too—she stood there above me, and each minute I thought

would be my last. One step forward, and I should have been squashed as flat as a pancake. But she did not take that step ; instead of that she moved backwards, and the finest view I have ever had of any animal was the rear elevation of that immense grey body. Just why had she not discovered me? Simply because her trunk was so far above the ground that the breeze carried my scent beneath her. It was a lucky escape.

XXIII

A GAME WARDEN IN UGANDA

by CAPTAIN C. R. S. PITMAN, D.S.O., M.C.

As Game Warden of Uganda my particular reserves cover several thousand square miles. I spend half the year camping in the jungle, and for the other half I do office work. In the course of a faunal survey of Northern Rhodesia my wife and I did a one thousand four hundred mile survey from the air: one night we were lost for an hour and a half in the dark over country which was entirely woodland. We eventually crashed into an unlighted aerodrome, with about eight minutes' petrol left. In December 1929, together with Professor and Mrs. Julian Huxley, we were marooned for several days on an islet in the Victoria Nyanza, both our launches having been swept away and sunk one night in a terrific storm.

My wife comes with me when I am camping, and our camp consists of two tents, about forty native porters to carry our loads, as well as gun-bearers, a native cook, and other personal servants. The natives quickly build themselves cosy grass huts, in which they sleep, so that a camp soon looks like a small village, and at night huge fires are kept burning, to scare away the wild animals. We are up early and often late getting to sleep, and always on the march, never stopping more than a day or two at any one place.

To keep a game reserve entirely for game, so that the animals are not disturbed, you must have gamekeepers and native policemen—"bobbies"—even in the heart of

the jungle! As far as we can we mark the game reserves by actual physical boundaries, though this is not always possible. Quite apart from actually running the game reserves, natives have to be trained to kill destructive animals, like elephants—not all, but some tiresome elephants. The natives have to become crack shots, and are taught to get within a few yards of an elephant before they shoot. This is all very nerve-racking for the game rangers who have to train them.

Painful experience has taught me to have a very wholesome respect for the African buffalo. I was once for thirty hideous seconds underneath a wounded buffalo. I have had an exceedingly nasty time with a tigress in India; I have experienced a horrible attack by a man-killing sloth-bear, virtually dead, with a gaping hole where its heart should have been, racing downhill in a last mad rush; and I suffered an incredibly tense moment when an enraged elephant stretched out its trunk to grasp me as I lay helpless and unable to move, with the muscles of my right calf split in half, as the result of jumping aside and falling into a concealed hole.

All these experiences scared me, and most experiences are dearly bought, but I first knew real fear when dealing with the African elephant. One of my particular jobs is to control the elephants. Elephants are tremendously destructive; nothing stops them. They smash down boundaries, crash through cultivated land, and generally cause considerable trouble. But before I go on to describe some of the wild animals themselves, here is a picture of the kind of country in which they roam about. Remember that most of Africa is still wild, and much of it has never been traversed at all.

Often there is hardly any water, and the prevailing landscape is a kind of leafless thorn-bush. Very common is a coarse growth, rather like hay, two or three feet high; and the limitless elephant grass is so tall that it will completely hide an elephant. Quite a normal height for this grass is fifteen feet. There are forests of trees with straight stems that rise eighty feet and more before they put forth a branch. And then, right at the top, the foliage is so thickly matted that it makes a sort of permanent night. Underneath, if there is any vegetation at all, it is usually stunted. There are bamboo thickets and giant heather, these rather like English heaths, with the difference that they are forty feet high or more.

Some of the country is quite grotesque, with extraordinary plants—groundsel, for instance—growing to a tremendous height. All these different kinds of vegetation show how great are the extremes of temperature, humidity and drought. You have only to look at the heights, which vary from one thousand feet to seventeen thousand feet above sea-level.

There are lakes, huge like great seas, such as the Victoria Nyanza, which is as large as Scotland.

Prominent in East Africa are the extraordinary rift valleys, the relics of some awful disaster in the remote past. There the heat can be terrific, especially at midday, and usually is intense from ten in the morning till nearly four in the afternoon. Elephants never stray far away from water. They will go and sit down in a water-hole, a shady one if possible, and plaster their heads and shoulders with cool mud. You might think they would seek the deepest shade they could find, but shade alone is not enough, because they get so terribly bitten by flies.

It is an extraordinary thing that a tiny fly can be a permanent source of irritation to such enormous animals.

On the extinct volcanoes to the south-west, on the Congo borders, there are scores of gorillas. A wild gorilla looks very fierce, though he can be a most faithful mate, and makes a devoted parent. It is a very terrifying thing to hear a great male gorilla sending out his challenge, even from a long way off. It makes one's blood run cold. This fierce demonstration is intended to cover the retreat of his family.

To encounter such a giant ape is to face six feet of incarnate fury. He may weigh as much as four hundred pounds, and he can span ten feet with his arms. He bares his huge fangs, his face puckers into a hideous snarl, and he stands quite upright: a posture very different from his usual stoop, with his knuckles resting on the ground.

In the past, gorillas usually contented themselves with a demonstration. Latterly they have suffered so much unnecessary disturbance in their mountains that they are apt to attack fiercely. The bravest person would find it difficult to study the mountain gorillas. Their home is above the ten thousand feet level, and is wrapt in almost perpetual mist. Sometimes the mist may lift for a moment, but it soon comes back and envelops everything in a kind of clammy blanket.

It is an extraordinary experience to climb one of the mountain peaks, rising into a chilly world of sleet, hail and mist, and then, in the evening, to camp in the heat zones at the bottom of the rift—near Lake Edward, for instance—eleven thousand feet lower.

Lake Edward is one of the smaller of the great lakes.

One of the most interesting things about it is the enormous numbers of hippopotamuses which inhabit it.

They are quite extraordinarily tame there; in fact, you can bathe right in the midst of these cumbersome animals without any fear. They are, as you know, very bulky creatures; they sometimes weigh three or four tons. They can swim, and though they cannot breathe under water, they can remain totally submerged for as long as ten minutes. I have often watched them, and have found that if they are not disturbed they usually come up to breathe every few minutes. A hippopotamus loves to stroll about on the bottom of a river or lake, but he never strays into deep water. In fact, wherever you see a hippopotamus you can generally be sure that the water is quite shallow.

Many African natives consider that hippopotamus meat is the most tasty delicacy in the world. I have often been pressed to try it, but so far I have not had the nerve. The hide is well water-proofed with a thick inner lining of rich yellow fat—a fine cooking fat; and a plump cow, killed at the time when the grazing is at its best, has been known to produce as much as one hundred and twenty pounds of this fat.

Because of its habits, a hippopotamus, when hunted, has usually to be killed in the water. The most effective shot to try is through the brain, as a result of which it quietly sinks. The hunter then has to wait until the gases of the semi-digested green food in its stomach raise the great carcass to the surface. He may have to wait only half an hour, but sometimes as long as twenty-four hours. A hippopotamus calf, when it is born, weighs about a hundredweight, and makes straight for the water. It is suckled under water. During the first few weeks of

its life the mother hippopotamus conceals the little one in a patch of reeds near the water's edge, but although out of sight it is never out of her mind, and mamma is always on the watch. Woe betide anyone who wanders near the little fellow! In a moment the infuriated mother, her huge red-lined jaws gaping wide, making fierce and disgusting noises, charges the intruder. Unless it were a matter of life and death no one would attempt to shoot such a hippopotamus, knowing that her anger was inspired by mother-love. Some people call hippopotamuses ugly. So they may be at close quarters, with their bristly, blubbery lips. But I can assure you that there are few prettier sights than the tiny calves standing on the backs of their half-submerged mothers.

If you want to hear the hippopotamuses at their very best, and being really noisy, you have only to pitch your camp on the banks of a river near one of the well-worn runs or paths. They come along these paths during the night, and then you have only to listen to know what they feel about you. Sleep is quite out of the question; they make the most appalling noise. They are really simply swearing at you.

A fight between hippopotamuses is an extraordinary spectacle. They have huge, razor-edged, sharply pointed tusks in the lower jaw, and they often kill one another during the mating season, when rival suitors fight each other desperately. I have come across the carcasses of huge males killed in such fights; one upward thrust has gone right through the heart.

Hippopotamuses get on perfectly well with crocodiles, which may be found in thousands in the same water, so long as the crocodiles behave themselves. But if a

crocodile is such a fool as to eat a baby hippopotamus for its supper there is naturally the most awful trouble. And a crocodile which has been savaged by a hippopotamus bears very little resemblance to a crocodile.

A crocodile lays eggs about three inches long by an inch and half in diameter. When these are fresh they are porcelain-white, shiny, and deeply pitted. An adult female may lay from fifty to seventy eggs. She deposits them in three or four layers, in a large hole scraped in the ground. When she has laid them all she covers them with earth, which is often rammed so tightly as to break some of the eggs. It is beyond the power of words to describe the smell of a crocodile's egg that has gone bad during the incubating process. This lasts three months, and all this time the crocodile has to guard her eggs against the great water-lizards, which are rather like the Komodo dragons in the London Zoo. If one of these lizards spots a nest unguarded, or succeeds, by a trick, in diverting the parent's attention for a moment, it makes very short work of the eggs. As a matter of fact, as it seems to be their job in life to destroy crocodiles' eggs, these lizards are undoubtedly doing very useful work. Crocodiles have no pleasant qualities, and the fewer crocodiles there are the better.

The mother crocodile knows when the babies are ready to hatch out by their shrill piping or squeakings, and she then unearths the eggs. Each infant has a small egg-tooth temporarily fixed on the top of the snout. This enables it to cut its way through the leathery integument of the egg. An extremely comical little face emerges, there is a tremendous wriggle, and out comes the rest of the body, which, when uncurled, measures about

ten inches in length. As fast as the little creatures hatch out they scuttle off to the water. Once the mother crocodile has cleared away the earth from above the eggs, she takes no further interest in her brood, except that she sometimes turns cannibal; hence the instinctive haste of her offspring to disappear into the water. From the moment of their birth, these tiny crocodiles are extremely noisy and pugnacious. They make loud chirruping noises, and bite like mad. They are very active, but luckily their teeth at this stage are too small to do any damage.

It is strange to see huge elephants browsing off the bushes at the edge of the water with enormous crocodiles basking peacefully only a few feet off. The African elephant is quite the most interesting of the wild fauna. Really big specimens weigh as much as six tons, and are over eleven feet high. A fine bull elephant may have tusks weighing one hundred and sixty pounds each. Just think what it must be to carry a weight equivalent to three sacks of coal in your head! Nature has ensured that the head shall be equal to the task, so it has arranged that the skull goes on growing with the tusks. Baby elephants weigh some two hundred pounds, and are about three and a half feet high; very pugnacious, very odd-looking, very noisy and precocious, surprisingly hairy and extremely disobedient. When they misbehave their mothers smack them so hard that I often wonder why they do not injure them permanently. Despite its great size, an elephant, in its early years, is quite a delicate animal.

The cow elephant's breasts are between the forelegs, and the baby, of course, sucks with its mouth, not with its trunk. Nature is usually pretty cruel, but tempers the wind to the lorn elephant; a really tiny orphan is

quickly adopted by some member of the herd. A cow with a suckling calf at foot is quite ready to adopt a hungry orphan of the same size. When a cow elephant is calving, the whole herd often waits about until the happy event has taken place and will not think of moving off until the proud parent is strong enough to travel.

The elephant's trunk is terrible in its strength, yet it is delicate and sensitive enough to pick up quite small objects. It weighs hundreds of pounds, a mass of nerves and muscles that makes one think of a flexible rod of steel. Anyone who has been unlucky enough to be seized by an elephant's trunk will probably carry the marks of the muscular ridges for years, if not for life.

People who are accustomed to seeing those placid creatures in the Zoo, accepting buns and plodding to and fro with a load of children, should realize that the African wild elephant is as different from the Zoo elephant as a wolf is from a terrier.

The famous Murchison Falls in Uganda are one of the world's beauty spots. They are still quite unspoilt; everything goes on exactly as it has for centuries. Numbers of magnificent elephants are to be seen there. When access is possible tourists are always very eager to visit this wonderful game sanctuary; but the best season is short.

At this point the whole volume of the River Nile forces its way through a cleft in the solid rock not more than twenty feet wide, and crashes down one hundred and fifty feet in a series of wonderful cascades. They fairly take one's breath away. At night, lions often stand on the high ground on either side of the river and compete in

uttering the most terrifying roars, which echo and re-echo round the rocky gorges.

I must not forget to say a few words about lions. A lion cub, when it is born, weighs twelve ounces. It is really quite minute. A newly born human baby sometimes weighs as many pounds as a lion cub does ounces!

Here is a lion story: It is extremely alarming to be waked up in the middle of the night to find that a large animal is trying to drag you out of bed. This is exactly what happened to a friend of mine more than ten years ago, and even now pieces of damaged bone have to be taken out of his knee from time to time. This gallant fellow continues to lead a lonely life in the same insecure room where this happened. He always sleeps with a heavy revolver under his pillow, but in this case he only just escaped with his life. As soon as he realized what was happening, thinking that the beast was a much smaller animal, possibly a hyena, he felt for an eye with his left hand, thrust the barrel of his revolver into the eye, and fired. The wounded and maddened beast crashed wildly round and round the room, and then fell out of the open door. Next morning a lion was found dead in the coffee-plantation a few hundred yards away from the house.

Before I conclude I must say a few words about the black rhinoceros. It is very short-sighted, and very bad-tempered. Although it weighs a ton and a half, a large crocodile once seized a rhinoceros by the leg and held on until the animal was so tired that it was pulled into a river and drowned.

And I must not forget the giraffe; one of Nature's freaks. A native tribe in Kenya has a very appropriate name for it: "The-animal-which-has-to-stoop-a-very-

long-way-before-it-can-nibble-grass." Sometimes they are twenty feet tall. They are very difficult to distinguish among trees; their odd-looking spotted necks, sticking up above the thorn-bushes, are sometimes mistaken for huge spotted snakes.

In my game reserve there are plenty of all the animals I have told you about; besides wild buffaloes, which are very savage, hundreds of antelopes both large and small—which are fairly tame; oddities like the prickly porcupine, which hurls itself backwards when it attacks; spiny-haired squirrels which live in holes in the ground, rather like rats; hyenas, detestable thieves, which laugh like demons; and little bush-babies, a sort of monkey with soft, silky fur, folding bat-like ears, big eyes, and hind legs like steel springs. They can jump twelve feet or more, and make the most delightful little pets you can imagine; and scaly ant-eaters, which live on white ants. White ants are not really ants; they are properly called termites. They are very destructive insects, and will eat the wood of your house, your books and even your boots. There are heaps of others too that live on frogs and fish. Once you get to know all these animals, even if some are savage, and would kill you for two pins, you never want to leave them.

XXIV

NEW INSECTS AND PLANTS FROM AFRICA

by F. W. EDWARDS

I HAVE been asked to tell you something about an expedition in which I recently took part, on behalf of the British Museum, to some mountains in East Africa. We were commissioned to collect specimens for the Museum, and to do our best to fill some gaps in our knowledge regarding the distribution of species and the relationships of plants and insects at high altitudes.

Many African mountains, though almost on the equator, are of sufficient height to reach beyond the zones of tropical warmth into regions of cool and even Arctic climate, and in these cool regions a very peculiar vegetation has been developed, totally unlike that found on the lower slopes. Many plants which in other parts of the world are lowly herbs are here represented by giant forms of tree-like growth. In ascending any tropical African mountain one passes through a similar series of vegetation zones—at the base thorny scrub; then a wide zone of dense forest with large trees; then, at an altitude of eight to ten thousand feet, a zone of bamboo forest; above that a forest of tree-heather; and, finally, from about eleven to fourteen thousand feet, a strange silent region where the dominant plants are the tree-groundsels with their cabbage-like leaves, and the giant lobelias with their gaunt spikes of flowers. Each mountain-top is like an island in a sea of tropical vegeta-

tion, and each has its own peculiar forms of plant and animal life.

With my colleague Dr. George Taylor I left England at the end of September for Kenya Colony, and a month later we began our first mountain expedition on the Aberdare Range, a hundred miles north-west of Nairobi. Here we were joined by two members of the Oxford and Cambridge Exploration Clubs, Mr. Patrick Synge and Mr. John Ford, who had come to Africa in the previous June, and had already discovered a new kind of giant groundsel during a preliminary expedition to Mount Elgon. From a hospitable settler's farm we were able to make several ascents through the dense forests to the alpine meadows near the summit of the range. Among our discoveries here was a curious beetle, looking as though it had sealing-wax spilt over it, which we found between the giant groundsel leaves.

From Kenya we went on by train to Uganda, and during a short stay in Kampala completed arrangements for rather more ambitious excursions. In making and carrying out our plans we received much valued assistance from various members of the Uganda Government services.

Early in November a party of five set out for the Birunga Mountains in the extreme south-west of Uganda—the home of the eastern gorilla. The recent completion of a new mountain road enabled us to bring our motor-lorry almost to the foot of the Birungas, but the Government rest-camp there was rather too far from our collecting grounds. So with the help of a small army of local natives a camp consisting of several bamboo huts was prepared in the saddle between two of the mountains.

Among our most interesting finds here were two new mosquitoes, the larvae of one of which we found in the water which collects in the bamboo joints after they have been bored into by some caterpillar. But neither here nor elsewhere on our trip were we troubled by the biting flies which give so much of Africa such a bad name.

Some members of the party were able to reach the summit of each of the three mountains forming the Birunga range. Two of these, Muhavura and Mgahinga, are typical conical volcanoes, rising abruptly from the plains, each with a small crater-lake at the top; the third, Sabinio, has no crater, and its summit is much more rugged, with sharp knife-edged ridges. In climbing Sabinio—which had been scaled only on one or two previous occasions—we saw many fresh traces of gorilla, elephant and buffalo, but the animals kept out of sight. Two of us spent a rather chilly night under a rock near the summit, and had wonderful views of two active volcanoes in the Mufumbiro Range, away in the Congo.

After returning for a time to Kampala, to attend to our collections, we set out on our next venture in the middle of December. This time we were bound for Ruwenzori, the famous snow-capped range on the western border of Uganda, which is sometimes known as "The Mountains of the Moon". Ruwenzori was in fact the main objective of our expedition, and we arranged to spend six or eight weeks in its vicinity. Previous visitors had given Ruwenzori a bad name as regards weather. It was said sometimes to rain for thirteen months of the year, and when it was not actually raining the mountains would be enveloped in cold wet mist. One expedition had experienced a total of seventeen hours of sunshine in five

months. But fine periods had been known to occur in January and July, and we timed our expedition in the hope that it might coincide with one of these. In this we were singularly fortunate, for the weather was almost continuously fine throughout January—a state of affairs which our porters probably explained as due to the sacrificial bananas which had been given to the Spirit of the Mountain.

We now had seven Europeans in our party, and required in all over a hundred porters and servants, so we arranged to divide our forces and work simultaneously through two little-known valleys in the southern part of the range, those of the Namwamba and Nyamgasani rivers.

The Namwamba party, which included Dr. Taylor and myself, was fortunate in obtaining hospitality at the Kilembe Copper Mine, which made an excellent base, and from which porters were obtained to carry our kit to the higher camps. There were some vexatious delays at first, because the millet-flour we had ordered for the porters did not arrive, and we were told we must not on any account give them maize-flour instead—they would eat it half raw, and probably burst!

While waiting for the missing flour we sent a small party ahead to find and clear the overgrown track. It was forty years since Scott-Elliott, the famous botanist-explorer, had made a hurried trip up this valley, and since then probably no European and few natives had explored it. We made five camps in ascending the Namwamba—first in a forest clearing at an altitude of six and a half thousand feet, on a ridge of land between two mountain torrents; then in the bamboo forest, on a

rocky ledge where there was only just room for our two tents, while the porters had to find what shelter they could in nooks and crannies of the rocks; then again at a little over ten thousand feet, among the first giant-heather trees, where a sort of cave under a gigantic boulder made an excellent porters' house and kitchen; again at the foot of a high cliff, at twelve thousand feet, where the rattling cries of the rock hyrax rent the night air; and finally at the head of the valley, at thirteen thousand feet, where the only sound at night—once the chatter of the porters had died down—was the rattling of the giant groundsel leaves, or the flapping of the tent-roof in the wind. From this highest camp we climbed another thousand feet over rocks and snow, to the top of a peak from which we had a marvellous view of the whole snow-clad range.

Insects were scarce at these high altitudes, but we found some curious flies, almost wingless, crawling over the snow. In the lower zones we succeeded in rediscovering two butterflies which had not been seen since their discovery on another part of Ruwenzori, thirty years ago, by a previous British Museum Expedition.

The party in the Nyamgasani Valley comprised Mr. Patrick Synge and two companions. They had a more difficult task, because the middle reaches of this valley were entirely untrodden, and fresh paths had to be cut through the thick jungle. Only the upper part of the valley, with its string of seven or eight beautiful lakes, had recently been explored by Dr. Noel Humphreys, the leader of the Oxford expedition in the Arctic.

A minor calamity befell this party at one of their highest camps. Two of them had gone out exploring, leaving the

third at the tent to make tea, but his fire got out of hand, raced through the parched herbage, and destroyed the tent with all their bedding and warm clothing. Nevertheless they were not daunted; their main concern was for the specimens, which were saved; they had another small tent, and for the next twelve frosty nights they all crowded into this, with only a tarpaulin for a covering. In the circumstances they have good reason to be proud not only of completing their collections, but also of being the second party to climb the fifteen-thousand-foot Weissmann Peak. One compensation for the fire was the discovery that roast chocolate is as good in its way as roast pork!

Our fourth and final excursion was to Mount Elgon, one of the largest extinct volcanoes in the world, but an easy mountain to climb, on account of the moderate gradients and the extent to which the forest has been cleared. We camped with a friend for a week at a height of ten thousand feet, and paid special attention to the mountain rats and their parasites. Our Masai porters caught the animals and brought them to us in bags, and we secured the fleas and ticks from them. Few fleas had been found so high up, and several of those we took proved to be new to science. We also explored a large cave in the foothills which was swarming with bats, while a pool in its dark recesses contained albino frogs. I caught a hundred or so of the bats at once in my butterfly net, while many hundreds more whirred about my head; these produced a good crop of parasites. My colleague maliciously accused me of planting fleas in his bed, but quite unjustly, for none of the bat-parasites, at all events, will attack humans. We were able, too, to add

several species to the list of Elgon flowers. One remarkable new moss-like flowering-plant was found growing on the rocks in the turbulent Swam River, and it needed some agility to avoid a ducking while gathering it.

And so back to rail-head—to port—and home. Modern transport had enabled us to solve a few minor mysteries of the once “dark continent”, now rapidly becoming so well known. But, thankfully let it be said, some problems still remain for our successors to work upon.

XXV

THE GOLDEN EAGLE

by CAPTAIN C. W. R. KNIGHT, M.C., F.R.P.S., F.Z.S.

JUDGING by remarks I have overhead and letters I have received, it would seem that an astonishing number of people who have seen pictures of me and one of my eagles in the newspapers are under the impression that an eagle is rather a jolly sort of a fellow to have about the house, and that it must be quite thrilling to let it fly loose and to know that it will come down out of the sky to your outstretched hand when you want it to. The other day I received a letter from a youth who must be, I imagine, about fourteen years old, saying that he had thought of keeping a pet eagle, asking me to tell him how to train it to come back to him, and adding at the end, "I think it would be such fun to see it swooping down from the sky to my side".

Such fun! . . . The trouble is that the eagle is apt to swoop down on to you when you are not expecting it, and when that happens the situation is likely to be more than funny! Dreadful, awe-inspiring, terrifying, would be more appropriate words to use.

I suppose it is difficult, indeed impossible, for anyone who never had the actual experience, to imagine the feeling of helplessness, of utter inability to *do* anything that overwhelms one when a huge eagle, with deep-set, glinting eyes, curved talons held at the ready, and a "woof-woof" of wings, comes hurtling straight at one's head.

What *can* one do in such a situation? It is no use standing there and waiting for someone else to do something about it. Safety lies in quick decision, and the *safest* thing to do is to fling out, before it is too late, the lump of meat or rabbit that you should *always* have by you when you let your eagle fly loose, in the hope that the bird will change its direction and crash into that instead of on to your face!

A much more dramatic move, if you can nerve yourself to chance it, is to extend your fist, covered with three thicknesses of horsehide glove, in a dead straight line between your face and the oncoming form of the eagle. The eagle will not deviate from its course, but, if you steel yourself and your aim is good, will land with an almighty whack against your glove; an impact that will in all probability send you staggering backwards. It is then just as well to get a grip with your unoccupied right hand of the leather straps, called jesses, which are attached to each of the eagle's legs, thus preventing it from persisting in its determination to close with your face.

I have, at home, an enormous Crested Eagle, which I brought over with me from South Africa, and which I often fly loose. It is a very heavy, exceedingly powerful, and all too frequently a much too ferocious bird. When, for some private reason of its own, it makes up its mind to return to me, there is no thwarting its purpose. It comes at me with immovable determination, and with the speed of an express train.

Even I, who am, after all, pretty well accustomed to such apparitions, cannot quite control the feeling of apprehensiveness that *will* get the upper hand each time

the huge bird bears down on me. What speed, what a beating of mighty pinions, and what a thump when its great talons hit the glove! It *is* a little terrifying. Not that I am, I hope, of a particularly nervous disposition. I have had various curious experiences of the sort in my life. I admit that I was frightened when a male ostrich came at me with the intention of delivering a downward rip with that horrid claw of his. I was frightened when, on one occasion in Africa, a lion passed within *nine feet* of me as I sat, absolutely unarmed, in a little photographic hide which I had built of grasses. But I do not think I ever lost my nerve.

Of course, one must know how to handle these eagles. If I may say so, I believe I am fairly good at it. Not so long ago a nephew of mine, noticing that this African Eagle seemed pretty docile and easy to handle, asked me if he might carry it for awhile. I naturally agreed, and succeeded in transferring it from my arm on to his. Then I took the liberty of suggesting that it would be a good idea if he were to get a grip on the jesses, so as to deprive the eagle of the opportunity of striking with its foot. He agreed that this seemed a good move, and lowered his head slightly to suit the action to the word. Suddenly, and without the slightest warning, the eagle shot out its great foot. Whop! I heard a quick gasp of terror; the boy's hands went up to his face as he flung the eagle aside. It was a nasty crack, and a good deal of blood was lost—but luckily the eagle did not *hang on*. One of the talons had penetrated less than an inch from his right eye.

A similar thing happened to me, only here the bird concerned was a female Golden Eagle, far bigger and

more powerful than a male. She had always been awkward, but I had persevered with her, as indeed I have done with most of my birds, because I was anxious to record her flight in slow-motion photography.

When the day for photography arrived we had two cameras going, normal speed and slow-motion, with a man to work each, and it was arranged that I was to shout to them when they were to begin to "shoot", and shout again when I wanted them to stop. Up to a point things proceeded according to plan. I gave the word to "Go", and she flew to me without hesitation, landed on my arm, steadied herself with her great out-spread wings, and sat gazing at, and listening to, the shrieking slow-motion camera. No sooner, however, had I shouted "Stop" to the camera-men than the eagle—perhaps irritated by all the noise and movement, or perhaps in the hope of making a meal off my flushed cheek—suddenly shot out her right foot and seized the left side of my face with such force that I was momentarily stunned. I might as well have been kicked by a horse. And the eagle hung on! Such awful, such incredible strength is exerted in the grip of those terrible talons that the idea of trying to *make* the eagle loose its hold is fantastic. If an eagle meant to hold on no man, no two men, could open its foot. And the two camera-men gazed at me speechless, open-mouthed, too dumbfounded even to move! I could feel one talon grinding against my cheek-bone; another had penetrated deeply beneath my left eye, and a third was clean through my ear. It looked as though the eagle had made up her mind that I should not escape *this* time. Desperate, I grabbed the eagle's

leg and literally tore it away from flesh and skin. Anything to be free! What luck that none of those talons had sunk into the eye-socket! Who then, short of killing the eagle first, could have separated us? As a result of the encounter, I developed a face that suggested a chronic attack of mumps, was injected against tetanus, and three stitches were put in one of the gashes. Nevertheless, we got the pictures. In a way it was a pity that I ever told the camera-men to stop. A film of myself being attacked by an eagle should have "gone over big" as they say across the Atlantic. In the end she was liberated. I sometimes woke up in the dead of night in a cold sweat, conjuring up visions of what might quite easily happen if she were to get loose on her own—without my influence to guide her actions. She might see a woman with a fur round her neck, mistake the fur for something to eat, and in her efforts to gain possession of it, sink her talons into the lady's neck. Horrible idea! Or she might decide to kill a child. . . . It did not bear thinking of. Eventually I made arrangements for release in a district where hares and rabbits abound, and where she would have no difficulty in fending for herself, on one of the Duke of Sutherland's deer forests, where golden eagles are strictly preserved.

Other eagles that I have possessed have been equally awkward. Miss America, for instance, who was given to me by Dr. Mann, Director of the National Zoological Park, Washington, U.S.A. Dr. Mann was of the opinion that I should never tame her. This particular sort of eagle, which has a white head and tail, is the emblem of the United States, and Dr. Mann said that no one had ever yet tamed one. Not even a Britisher! That, of course,

only served to make me all the keener to try! So Miss America came to England.

I must admit that for a time I despaired of doing any good with her. She refused to sit up on my fist, but persisted in hanging head downwards like a slaughtered fowl, and when she did sit up she spent her time in trying to come to grips with my face. The worst of the American Eagle is that it uses its beak as well as its feet. The other eagles that I have mentioned rely on their talons when they go into battle, but the American type uses its beak as well. This makes it, at times, a little awkward to handle. The eagle, sitting serenely enough on your arm, seems to be surveying the surrounding country, and not in the least interested in you. Suddenly, quite unexpectedly, its head swivels round, shoots out in the direction of your face, and with a loud hiss endeavours to remove a beakful from your cheek! But in spite of everything, including what Dr. Mann had said, I *did* tame Miss America, and I am inclined to think that the slow-motion pictures which I secured of her flight are among the most effective in my collection.

The trouble is that with eagles—eagles, that is, that are in perfect health, keen and full of vigour as they should be—you *never know*.

Even Mr. Ramshaw, whose portraity you may have seen, as it has often appeared in the newspapers, *can* be ugly. His thousands of friends in this country, in the United States, in Canada, in South Africa, will find that difficult to believe. They always see him when he is on his best behaviour; probably in some lecture hall, where, having “done his stuff”, he has a jolly good feed and everything looks rosy. Children gather round to stroke his golden

head; some of the more reckless even ask if they can hold him on *their* arm for a bit. And Ramshaw puts up with it all—even enjoys the notice that is taken of him.

It is only when he feels that he has been treated unfairly, has had his food taken away before he has even tasted it, that he sometimes becomes resentful and forgets himself for a few moments. I know exactly the sort of things that make Ramshaw furious, and try to avoid doing them.

After all, I should know Mr. Ramshaw pretty well. He has crossed the Atlantic with me *ten* times and has accompanied me to South Africa twice. He seems quite to enjoy the trips. Of course, from time to time the most hair-raising or ridiculous incidents have occurred. I quite thought that I had lost him in New York the last time we were there, for when I went out on to the roof of the hotel where he lives on such occasions I found that he had gone. The chain by which he is tied up had parted company in the middle, and half, therefore, had gone away with Ramshaw. Here was a nice to-do! He might have flown anywhere by this time, and might be caught up by his chain and unable to move. He might be hanging head downwards waiting till death came to put him out of his misery.

And then, Heaven be praised, I caught sight of him sitting on a church steeple on the other side of Fifth Avenue. Lowell Thomas told the story over the radio that evening. How I had dashed into the hotel for a piece of beef; how bell-boys, waiters and guests came crowding on to the roof to see the fun. How I swung the beef on the end of a piece of blind-cord and called hysterically to Ramshaw. How he took not the slightest notice until I ordered everyone into the hotel. And

then how Ramshaw sailed with all the majestic grace of his wild relatives across Fifth Avenue back to my side!

At last I could breathe freely again! What an experience! Lowell Thomas said that the traffic was held up in Fifth Avenue. I was far too anxious about Ramshaw to think about that. It was too nearly a disaster. Much more amusing—to me—was a little incident that occurred in Chicago. I had reached the hotel at some unearthly hour the previous night and had smuggled Ramshaw up to my room, and fixed him up on his hamper, placed in the bath tub. Next morning I went off to look for the manager, to ask him if I might fasten Ramshaw on the roof. I do not think I mentioned that practically every hotel in the United States has a flat roof. Well, I got the necessary permission and was returning to my room when I heard a shriek ahead of me, my door was flung open and a white-faced maid rushed screaming out into the passage! She had gone, all unthinking, into the bathroom to find herself face to face with an apparently ferocious eagle!

In South Africa he missed death by a few seconds. On one of his flights, high in the air, he spotted some chicken far away. Now Ramshaw has, I very much regret to say, a definite *penchant* for fowl, and straightway, but without any show of undue hurry, started in pursuit. Very cleverly he worked his scheme. First he manoeuvred for position, gradually gaining height and working towards his intended victims. Presently, at a terrific height, he was above them. For a moment I hoped that he was not planning an attack—he seemed to be so leisurely. Then, all of a sudden, he turned sideways and came, like a bolt from the blue, towards the earth. The chicken scattered,

shrieking and dashing for cover. One left it too late. I saw a cloud of feathers fly and knew what had happened. On such occasions Ramshaw seldom misses. I scented trouble. The squawkings of chicken are likely to arouse the suspicions of the farmer, and if the farmer can get a shot at an eagle, well . . .

I ran as fast as I could, which is not frightfully fast. And I arrived on the scene just as the farmer emerged from his house slipping a couple of cartridges into his gun.

So Ramshaw was saved, for I explained that he was a tame bird and that an unfortunate accident had happened. As always, on such occasions, the chicken was a show one. Very expensive. But these are just a few incidents that have happened in the course of Ramshaw's career. I want to make it clear that we have been through much together and that we therefore know each other pretty well. Yet, in spite of his usually charming disposition, his intelligence, and his tolerance towards me, Ramshaw is capable of forgetting himself if he feels that he has been treated unjustly, as is suggested by the bruises and scars on my arms, shoulders and back—results of a little difference we had the other day. Ramshaw is not easily roused, but when he is . . . *look out!*

XXVI

FILMING IN THE FROZEN NORTH

by ROBERT FLAHERTY

ONE night Nanook and I were talking over the prospect of getting a film of Polar bear. It was a subject I had long wanted to film. All winter long not a bear had been seen for miles up or down the coast. Nanook explained that it was because the sea-ice was packed in upon the land; only where there was open water was there a chance for bear.

"But," said he, "I have an idea. The great land for bear is in the north. It is many, many days' sledging away. But no matter, let me tell you. This land is big, big land sticking out into the sea like this." In illustration he stuck out his thumb at right angles to his hand. "It is high, higher than our highest hills; and always at its end, no matter how much the sea-ice may be packed in elsewhere, here, because the sea flows swift, like a swift river, there is always open water. And moreover," he continued, his wonderful old face alight—the keen, eager face of the great hunter that he was—"there is this that happens there. This big land is one of the rare places where the she-bear dens in winter to bring forth her young. Would it be interesting to you," he asked, "if you could make a film of me capturing the she-bear and her cub in the den?"

Of course, I became excited at once. This was a picture possibility I had not even dreamed of.

"Go ahead, Nanook, tell me more!"

"Well," said Nanook, "along the slopes of this big land the drifts are very deep. In these drifts the bear scrapes out a cave for herself."

"But how will you find a cave?" I asked, very much puzzled.

"The dogs will smell it," replied Nanook. "From each den there is a tiny vent, and a thread of steam rises from it. This steam comes, of course, from the body heat of the bear. One must be careful," he added, with a wry smile, "the sledge can break through at such a place, and the she-bear when she has cubs . . ." Here he broke off with a laugh, leaving me to conjure just what a hell-cat a she-bear could be if we broke in upon her.

"The drivers must be quick to leap in front of the dogs," Nanook went on, "to cow them with the whips and keep them quiet. Then, when you have set up your camera, with my bear-spear and snow-knife I will go forward. I will get on my hands and knees and crawl as quietly as I can, and when I get to the vent out of which comes the tiny thread of steam, with my snow-knife, very carefully, I will begin to open it up."

I held my breath. "Have you ever done this before, Nanook?" I asked.

"Oh yes," said he, quite as though it were a matter of course.

"What if the bear charges?" I asked.

"Then the drivers will unloose the dogs," he replied. "The dogs will bite at the bear. I will back out, and with my spear be ready to defend myself." He looked up at me eagerly. "Shall we go?" he asked.

Within a few days we were ready to start. The weather had become extraordinarily cold, so cold that when I

tried to thread my camera the film broke, shivered into bits like so much wafer-glass. I decided to carry the camera and film wrapped up in the folds of my eiderdown sleeping-bag, which, after I had slept in it all night, would still retain enough heat, I hoped, to keep them warm enough, so that they could be used.

Nanook got together the best team of dogs there was to be had. It was a spanking, fine team, every one of them in the pink of condition. For them and the men we carried food—frozen seal meat—as much as the load would bear; not enough, of course, to see us through the journey. We must depend, as the Eskimo hunter always does, on the seals we would catch along the way. My own food was a bag of frozen pork and beans, a hundred pounds of it. These beans I would thaw out on a small Primus stove, which also served to melt ice for water and boil tea.

From the first day out the going was hard. There were heavy gales head-on, and unusually deep snow. Mile after mile the dogs strained with their bellies almost touching the ground. We struck out to the ice far out at sea, in the hope that there the snow would be harder packed by the wind and the going easier for the dogs. But here, with stronger gales, the weather grew worse if anything, and the going harder and slower. Our time was consumed, too, by Nanook's hunting for seal, which he could never find. He said he had never seen anything like it. Never had he travelled so far without finding seal. We passed Eskimos travelling south, a whole village of them. They were abandoning the country because there were no seal.

We gave up hope of killing any food on the way. We

would reduce our rations so that they would see us through until we got to the big land where Nanook was certain of getting seal. But the delays were endless. A blizzard struck us, the worst blizzard of the year. We had to build our igloo where we were, far out at sea. Thick-walled though it was, the fury of the storm all that night filled our ears. I wondered whether the blizzard might not whip over into the north-east and carry us on our ice-field out to sea, for every now and then the ice under us groaned and cracked ominously.

When day came we still could not move; even if the ice did break there was nothing we could do about it; the drift was head-on, and so thick that, said Nanook, if we put the dogs into it they would suffocate.

However, the blizzard cleared at last, and far to the north of us we could at last see the Cape, Nanook's big land, Cape Sir Thomas Smith, rising gigantically above the frozen sea. Our spirits rose; our hardships would soon be over. We pressed on as fast as the dogs could go. They, poor devils, were almost done. One of them limped and halted so much we had to cut him out of the team. For awhile he valiantly limped after us; then we saw him sink into the snow. "Tiamok" (the end), said Nanook compassionately, for like every Eskimo he loved his dogs. Another one fell in his traces. But this time Nanook mercifully finished him with his spear; then, holding the poor gaunt carcass up, he rubbed his hands across its glaring ribs, showing that there was nothing left for either dog or man to eat.

Stumbling almost as much as walking, we reached the Cape that night. The dogs, unharnessed, sank at once into the snow, and quickly the drift began to cover them.

The wind was dying down; the sky was clear; in the west the weak sun was sinking behind an illimitable field of ice. The Cape loomed gigantically before us, its profile still blurred by the smoke of low-drifting snow. For miles the slopes of its fore-foot, deep in drift, stretched away out to sea. In these drifts, somewhere, we should find the den where Nanook would hunt the bear.

But look where I would from where I was standing, I could still see no open water. Nanook had climbed to a higher point. From where he was he could look farther afield. The men, who were building an igloo near by, had stopped work and were watching him intently. Nanook stood strangely still. The dogs, now almost covered by the drift, shifted restlessly; one of them, rising on his haunches, lifted his nose and wailed his hunger to the sky. Then Nanook turned, and by the way he walked down toward us I knew that the worst had happened. After all these hundreds of miles we had fought, sure that our troubles would be over, we had come to a dead end—the ice-fields were solid. Nowhere was there, even here, a sign of open water.

The next ten days were pretty tough. Every day from daybreak to dark Nanook and the crew hunted through the ice, while the dogs, too weak to move, and myself not much better off, kept camp. For ten days two foxes and an Arctic hare that Nanook killed kept us going. On the tenth day night had fallen long since and there was not a sign of Nanook. The hours dragged on. The blackness of the igloo—for days there had been no fuel left for light—seemed eternity. I began to worry. I had noticed that morning that Nanook had left untouched the ration of my beans that I had set out for

him. How the devil would he carry on? I knew that every day they were hunting farther and farther out at sea. What if the ice had broken and he had been carried seaward on a drifting floe?

I must have fallen asleep; I only know that I was dreaming, dreaming about food, of course—shiploads and shiploads of food—when suddenly I was wakened. I looked up to see Nanook's face, smiling from ear to ear, bent over me. He pointed to the floor; on it lay a seal—a huge seal—he must have weighed a thousand pounds.

Within a week we were strong enough to move about a little. We spent some time hunting dens, but then there were gales of wind, and the drift was too blinding. Then, as suddenly as they had opened, the ice-fields closed in again. There was nothing else for it; we struck off for home.

On the fifty-fifth day we got home, having travelled, as we found, more than seven hundred miles, and with not an inch of film. As a matter of fact, we did use our film up on the way home, but not for pictures. We stumbled over a pile of driftwood, and the film served to light it! It kept us warm for a few minutes, and boiled a pail of tea for us.



XXVII

MY FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA AND BACK

by JEAN BATTEN

I THINK it was definitely the most thrilling moment of my life when on my return flight from Australia I first sighted the cliffs of Dover, and I feel I am very lucky indeed to have achieved this flight without any worse mishap than a punctured tyre.

I left Darwin on April 12th, 1935, and although I had no intention of trying to break my own record for the journey, I found that on the first day, aided by a good following wind, I was able to fly approximately one thousand one hundred miles to Rambang, in the Dutch East Indies. The second day also I made fairly good time, although hindered in the Dutch East Indies by very bad rainstorms and thunderstorms. I arrived at Batavia on the second day out from Darwin, and on the third day, after an eventful flight, I arrived in Singapore. It was after leaving Singapore that I encountered adverse winds, and once I had crossed the Equator I was retarded by fairly strong head-winds of various degrees of velocity. Travelling up the Malay Peninsula to Victoria Point I had the remarkable experience of flying through an electrical storm, and although I have done a considerable amount of flying, and have flown through some very bad weather, I had never before flown through an electrical storm, and it was not a pleasant experience.

I flew on up the Malay Peninsula, over parts of Siam

and Burma, to Rangoon and Calcutta, and across India. On arriving in Karachi I was kept waiting for a Persian *visa* on my passport, and had to leave without it. From Karachi to England I took rather longer than I expected, although on arriving in Rome I was actually one day ahead of my time for the outward journey. After leaving Rome, and on my journey across France, I met with very bad weather indeed, and was retarded by the mistral, which was blowing across the Mediterranean at forty to forty-five miles an hour. At one stage I had the mortification of seeing a motor-car pass me.

For a day or two I was fog-bound in France, and I was very happy indeed to arrive at Croydon on the twenty-ninth of April, thus completing the first return journey by a woman from England to Australia and back again, and achieving a record each way.

XXVIII

FALLING THROUGH THE AIR

by ROBERT WYNDHAM

HUNDREDS of times different people have said to me: "Oh, Mr. Wyndham, parachuting must be a wonderful sensation. It looks so nice to see a parachute gently floating through space!" As an answer to that, I will give you a few instances of things that have happened to me during the course of my career as a professional parachutist.

Some little time ago I had to make a jump for a film company at Stag Lane Aerodrome. The weather conditions were very bad—a high wind of about forty miles an hour, blowing up to gusts of over fifty, low clouds, and really poor visibility. I should have liked to put it off, but I could not do so, because the cameraman and technical staff had all come down, and it would have meant a serious waste of time and money had we postponed the jump to another day. So, against the advice of various officials, I took off and climbed to about twelve hundred feet. My pilot eased the throttle back when we were some little way beyond the aerodrome, as I reckoned that the high wind from that point would take me straight into the middle of the 'drome. I stepped out on to the wing, put my hand on the rip-cord, and dived off. After falling for about five or six seconds, I pulled out the cord, and the 'chute opened up successfully. Just as it had opened the wind dropped, and I found, to my horror, that I was coming straight down

on to the Electric Railway lines, where the trains were passing every few seconds. I saw a train coming along just then, and was wondering which was going to win, the train or myself, but by pulling hard on the shroud-lines I managed to slip the 'chute to the left, passing about ten feet over the lines and some fifty yards behind the train.

On another occasion I was engaged as parachutist by an "air circus" which was touring India. At Agra I had the misfortune to dislocate my only wrist. We arrived at Delhi next day. The Viceroy, his lady and his staff were all there to see us "do our stuff", and I, being the only parachutist still working, my partner having crashed at Calcutta about two weeks earlier, had to undertake the jump. My one fear was that my wrist would not be strong enough to pull out the rip-cord. Nevertheless, towards evening I went up and did my jump, and found, when I tried to release the 'chute, that my worst fears were realized. My fingers kept on slipping off the ring, and all the while, of course, I was tearing down towards the earth, only two thousand feet away, at the rate of about two hundred and twenty feet a second. I suppose fear must have given me added strength, because, to my great surprise, I found the 'chute released, and the rip-cord falling away from me, having slipped out of my bandaged fingers. On that occasion I did not land on the aerodrome, but fell on the road outside it, as I was unable to pull the shroud-lines to guide the parachute to the aerodrome.

At Reigate I once had another very narrow escape, which I think will prove that the parachutist's life is not a bed of roses. I had two stunts to do: first of all, a

parachute jump, and then some wing-walking and under-carriage work. The jump itself was successful enough, but for the fact that when the 'chute opened I found myself travelling backwards, and was unable to turn. The parachute let me down hard, and the back of my head hit the ground with an appalling thud. I felt a bit shaken, but otherwise all right, and decided to get on with the second part of the programme. Having walked all over the wings, and waved to the camera-man's 'plane from various positions, I climbed carefully down to the under-carriage. I had previously arranged with my pilot, with whom I communicated by signals, that when I was hanging head downwards from the under-carriage he would take the plane close enough to the ground for me to pick up a line of flags suspended between two poles. This I did successfully on the second attempt. We then landed, and started to walk towards the pilot's home, which was quite near. All of a sudden everything went black in front of my eyes, and for the first, and I hope the last, time in my life, I fainted, to wake up forty-eight hours later in St. George's Hospital, where the doctors told me that I had torn all the muscles in the back of my neck and was suffering from severe concussion. The question is, what would have happened had this black-out occurred while I was wing-walking? —for obviously the damage was done on landing after the previous parachute-jump.

Here, in conclusion, is another painful episode. Not very long ago I had to do three parachute drops. One was what is known as a "pull-off": which means that I stand on the end of the wing, hanging on to a strut, and at the right moment release the parachute, which, when

inflated, pulls me off the wing. Secondly, I had to make an ordinary drop, like those I have already described; and, thirdly, a delayed drop; that is, I had to fall like a stone for a certain period before opening the 'chute. The first two jumps were effected without incident, but on making the third jump I had arranged to step off the 'plane at three thousand five hundred feet, and rip open the 'chute when one thousand feet from the ground. I must have delayed a little longer than I thought, for I found that I was going to land outside the aerodrome. By pulling on the shroud-lines I managed to come down on the very edge of the 'drome, but there trouble awaited me in the shape of glass-houses. My feet broke through the roof of one of these glass-houses and the force of the impact made me sit down very hard on the broken pieces. A doctor spent the best part of an hour pulling bits of broken glass out of my seat. All my so-called friends, and others, were highly amused. My thoughts, I think, had better be left unuttered.

THE MOUNTAINEER

XXIX

ASSAULTS ON EVEREST

by HUGH RUTTLEDGE

I THINK it was an Australian poet who wrote:—

“No game was ever worth a rap for a sensible man
to play,
Into which no accident, no mishap, could possibly
find a way.”

Those words call to a deep-rooted instinct in Man; a legacy, no doubt, from the time when living dangerously was the common lot of all, as it still is of wild creatures to-day. So we sometimes wish to forget for a little the artificial safeguards of civilization, and we turn to sports which contain an element of danger, and in which we must depend on ourselves alone. Among these sports is mountaineering, which takes us straight to Nature at her wildest, and demands many of the qualities we instinctively value.

Nowhere, perhaps, can a man find a more complete test of himself than on Mount Everest, where he has to pit his own strength, physically so puny, spiritually as yet unmeasured, against the tremendous power of the mountain. Everest's defences are threefold: firstly there is altitude, which implies a greatly diminished oxygen supply in the air, and a consequent rapid deterioration, physical and mental, in the climber; secondly, the violent west wind, bitterly cold after its passage down the whole length of the Himalayas; thirdly, there is the dangerously deceptive nature of the rock structure. This is for the

most part a hard, smooth limestone, in what mountaineers call "writing-desk" formation. That is to say, on one side is a colossal precipice, some fourteen thousand feet high and utterly unclimbable; on the other, a seemingly easy slope of which the *average* angle may be not more than forty degrees. But this slope consists of slabs dipping consistently downwards and outwards, evilly smooth and destitute of good ledges or even handholds. And the worst of it is that the higher you go the steeper these slabs become. It is like climbing on the slates of a steep roof, where you must depend on balance and on the friction of your bootnails. When dry powder snow lies on those slabs the difficulty is much increased.

The real danger-zone of Everest begins above Camp III, at over twenty-one thousand feet. Here is the twelve-hundred-foot wall of ice and snow leading to what is called the North Col. It is a hanging glacier, liable to be raked at any moment by avalanches. The expedition of 1921 reached the top of this wall, at twenty-three thousand feet. Soon after Mallory and his companions had climbed the last snowslope, it peeled right off the underlying ice and went crashing down; that was Everest's first counter-stroke.

In 1922 both attacks and counter-attacks were more serious. Three members of an exhausted party, descending the North ridge from a climb to nearly twenty-seven thousand feet, slipped almost simultaneously, and Mallory was only just able to hold them with the rope. Then Finch and Geoffrey Bruce tried their luck, using oxygen. They reached twenty-seven thousand three hundred feet, where Bruce's oxygen apparatus broke down. Not being naturally acclimatized to this altitude, he rapidly lost

consciousness, and was with difficulty saved from falling off backwards. Lastly, on the fatal day of June 7th a great avalanche on the North Col swept away three climbers and eighteen porters. Seven of the latter were carried over an ice-cliff and killed.

But it was not till the third expedition, in 1924, that Everest really unmasked her batteries. She began with a series of terrible westerly storms which almost exhausted the party before they had even reached the North Col. Then Mallory, in order to avoid the avalanche route of 1922, was obliged to make a difficult ascent up steep ice, including an almost vertical ice-chimney sixty feet high. A sudden blizzard cut off four porters on the North Col. Their rescue was a noble feat of arms. Mallory and Norton belayed the rope round an ice-pinnacle, and Somervell traversed out across a very steep slope, cutting steps through the treacherous surface snow into the ice beneath. The rope was not long enough. He had to untie it from his waist and continue, holding the end of it in his hand; till, at the extreme stretch of his arms, he was able to grab one porter by the collar and haul him to safety. The four porters had completely lost their nerve after a patch of snow slipped away under two of them and carried them down twenty-five feet, mercifully stopping on the very edge of an ice-cliff. One by one they were passed along that frail rope, trembling and slipping at every step. Somervell, as cool as a cucumber, cracked jokes all the time, to keep their spirits up in the very jaws of death; and then followed, upright and in perfect balance, along the line of ruined steps.

After this Norton and Somervell made their great assault, and were the first men to tackle the upper slabs

of the North face, which becomes steeper and more dangerous as the final pyramid is approached. Somervell, in agony from a high-altitude throat, and making progress at a rate of one step to eight or ten gasping breaths, stopped at about twenty-eight thousand feet and begged Norton to go on without him. Norton was in none too good case himself. He was seeing double, owing to the combined effects of exhaustion and incipient snow-blindness. But he struggled on alone for an hour, in which time he covered perhaps three hundred yards horizontally and eighty feet upwards. He had a terrible time crossing a gully where deep powder snow masked the ledges, and he had to step boldly down into it, hoping that his boot-nails would hold him on the rock beneath. One slip here and he would fall nine thousand feet to the Rongbuk glacier. When he turned back, exhausted, he was probably within one thousand feet of the summit. How he and Somervell got down alive to the North Col, five thousand feet below, nobody quite knows. Norton was nearly blind by then, and completely so for the next three days; and Somervell was nearly choked by the scab in his throat.

As a last effort, Mallory and Irvine now went up with oxygen. We know they reached Camp VI, at twenty-six thousand eight hundred feet; and Odell thinks he saw them on the face next day. Then they disappeared. An axe which must have belonged to one of them was found on the slabs of the face in 1933, and it is not unlikely that they fell here. It is almost impossible to check a slip when there is no hold for the hands.

In 1933 we were very fortunate in having no fatal accidents, though there were some narrow escapes. The

weather was possibly worse even than in 1924. The North Col was difficult to reach—in one place Smythe had to cut steps up an ice-wall forty feet high, the greater part of it vertical, and the lower ten feet or so actually overhanging. He was hoisted up by Shipton on the head of an ice-axe, and then, of course, had to cut handholds as well as footholds, clinging on with one hand while using the axe with the other—a terrific strain at an altitude of twenty-two thousand five hundred feet. We were in constant danger from avalanches on this face during the operations.

Two men—Birnie and Wyn Harris—were nearly killed through imprudently trying to glissade down steep snow high up on the North ridge. Birnie was saved by a porter who stopped him with a sort of flying Rugger tackle; and Wyn Harris, just in time, stopped himself with his axe, turning the pick slowly over till it made a deep groove in the snow and acted as a brake.

Longland, convoying down the eight gallant porters who carried our highest camp to twenty-seven thousand four hundred feet, was caught in a sudden blizzard and nearly lost. Nothing but consummate mountain craft could have got that party down alive. The highest camp, by the way, had to be pitched on a wretched little downward-sloping ledge, the only one available, yet so narrow that one-third of the tent floor projected unsupported over the edge, and there was always a danger of the wind blowing the whole thing off the mountain.

Shipton, descending alone from twenty-eight thousand feet, also in bad weather, was nearly destroyed when he let himself down by his hands from a ledge on to a snow-patch which promptly slipped away. He had only just

strength to pull himself back, and then the fearful cold of the wind almost persuaded him to turn in search of Camp VI. Had he done this he would infallibly have been frozen to death.

Smythe, who had, like Norton, to tackle the higher slabs alone when his companion was obliged to give up, got on to some very difficult ledges, where he felt once or twice, as he edged his way along facing the rock, that an extra deep breath would topple him over backwards ; and at one place he had just wedged the pick of his axe in a crack when his foothold gave way. On his return down the mountain, after reaching approximately the same height as Wyn Harris and Wager two days before, and Norton in 1924, he in turn was caught by one of those sudden, deadly blizzards, and was three times blown clean off his legs, saving himself on each occasion with the axe.

I am afraid I have rather piled on the agony in these stories, being obliged to take them out of their context in so short an article. Let me close by saying that there is plenty of light as well as shade in an Everest expedition, and that anyhow a period of "living dangerously?" is justified in the pursuit of one of the last great adventures of the world.

XXX

NAANDA DEVI AND THE GANGES

by ERIC SHIPTON

THE main objective of the small expedition which I took to the Central Himalayas in 1934 was to penetrate into the mysterious basin surrounding the great peak of Nanda Devi. The mountain, twenty-five thousand six hundred and sixty feet high, is the loftiest in the British Empire, and yet, in spite of repeated efforts, no one had succeeded in reaching even the country which lies at the feet of the "Blessed Goddess", as Nanda Devi is called by the Hindus.

The reason for this is the fact that the peak is surrounded by a seventy-mile ring of mountains which must surely be unique. On the crest of this ring are situated scores of peaks over twenty thousand feet in height.

The only break in the amphitheatre is on the west, where the Rishi Ganga River, draining an area of some two hundred and fifty square miles of snow and ice, bursts its way through the walls, thus forming a gorge whose aspect is so fearsome that it has been regarded as the last earthly home of the Seven Sages or Rishis of Hindu mythology. Here, if anywhere, their meditations would be undisturbed.

No fewer than nine expeditions had already attempted to get into the Nanda Devi basin, some by way of the Gorge, while others had attacked the mighty walls of the rampart itself.

My companions in 1934 were H. W. Tilman, with

whom I had climbed a good deal in Eastern and Central Africa, and Passang, Angtharkay, and Kusang, three of those splendid Nepalese Sherpas who had served us so gallantly on Everest in 1933.

Our chosen line of approach was the Rishi Ganga gorge, the mouth of which we reached about the middle of May, after ten days' march from the hill station of Ranikhet, in the United Provinces. We had brought with us eleven Dotial porters, and at the tiny village of Surai Tota we engaged eight more men to help with the transport and supply local knowledge.

We found, as had Graham before us, that the lower part of the gorge was quite impassable, and we had to make a big detour to the north, over some high passes which were still under a deep covering of winter snow.

A crisis which threatened to wreck our plans at the very outset was caused by the desertion of the Surai Tota men. However, the Dotials shouldered enormous loads, and followed us with wonderful determination and loyalty. For two days we floundered through snow waist-deep before we could get across the first pass..

On May 28th, in a heavy snow-storm, we reached the farthest point to which our predecessors had penetrated in this direction. Here we established a base camp, discharged our faithful Dotials, and began our search for a way across the grim precipices of the Upper Valley into the untrodden basin beyond.

We were now in what must be one of the most fantastic gorges in the world. The cliffs of the canyon rise almost sheer out of the river bed to form peaks twenty thousand feet high.

Now only four miles divided us from our goal, but it

was only after nine days of hard work, crossing the tremendous precipices of the gorge, along tiny ledges which were connected, high above the river, by the smallest and most fragile of links, that we succeeded in setting foot in the hitherto inviolate sanctuary.

We found ourselves in a world of indescribable beauty. Here were luxuriant pastures, brilliant with wild flowers, and lakes on whose deep blue and green surfaces were reflected the icy crests of the great peaks; here too were birds of many species and brilliant plumage, and large herds of wild animals, which were so tame, and regarded these strange new visitors with such curiosity, that I was glad that I had not brought a rifle with which to add to our food supply. All around us was mountain architecture more magnificent even than the great southern battlements of Everest.

It was at once obvious that to make even a rough exploration of the basin in the time available before the monsoon was out of the question, so we decided to concentrate on the northern section, and to return to investigate the country to the south after the main strength of the monsoon had abated.

It was a wonderful and thrilling experience to be the first to wander for three long weeks in that shrine of natural loveliness, before the first burst of the monsoon, and the fact that our food supply was exhausted, forced us to retreat by the way we had come. We found that the rivers were enormously swollen, and had swept away our bridges. This delayed us, and a long series of forced marches had to be made down the gorge in heavy rain, while our meagre food dumps were speedily dwindling.

In July we journeyed north, to the range which gives birth to the River Ganges. For six weeks we explored the glacier regions of this part, climbing peaks and crossing passes into unknown valleys.

The last of these passes caused us a great deal of trouble. On its farther side we found ourselves on a six-thousand-foot precipice of broken ice, down which we were forced to cut steps, laboriously, for two long days. Lower down things looked so hopeless that I think Tilman and I would have abandoned the attempt, had it not been for the extraordinary enthusiasm of the Sherpas, who would not admit defeat. This was another striking example of the loyalty of these men, who were always ready to face any danger in order that their sahibs might achieve their purpose.

With such allies we hope one day to reach the summit of Mount Everest; without them the task would be very nearly hopeless.

When we reached the foot of the ice cliffs we became involved in bad jungle, through which it was heavy work to cut a track. We now struck really bad weather. It rained almost incessantly day and night. All our kit got waterlogged, which made the loads very heavy. The undergrowth was so thick that in places it took us as much as an hour to cover twenty-five yards. Passang, too, broke a small bone in his foot. This put him out of action for any work, and the task of keeping up with us, over the precipitous country which followed, must have caused him frightful pain.

A deep ravine, containing a formidable torrent, cost us two valuable days before we could bridge it. Time was valuable, owing to the shortage of our food supply,

which actually ran out nearly a week before we reached the first habitation.

The undergrowth was relentless in its density, and hacking our way through the tangled thorn scrub we were hard put to it to cover more than a mile a day. The forest was full of bear tracks, which greatly alarmed the Sherpas, so that they sang and shouted all day long in order to scare the animals away. They succeeded in doing this so effectively that we saw only one bear during our sojourn in the forest. He was of the black variety. These beasts, though not wantonly vindictive, possess a very poor sense of smell and hearing, and if one happens to come upon them suddenly they will attack from sheer fright. We had no weapons, of course, beyond our ice-axes.

Luckily for us the bamboo shoots were ripe for eating, a circumstance which undoubtedly saved us from a very serious predicament.

We used to halt each evening at 5.30. This gave us just time before dark to build a bamboo shelter, under which we could protect a fire from the continuous torrential rain, and so prepare a meal of bamboo shoots and tea. Dead bamboo, however sodden, makes most excellent kindling, and without this and a small supply of paraffin we should have had to forgo the luxury of a fire. Thus this excellent plant provided us with shelter, fire and food.

We were beginning to suffer from that unpleasant feeling of weakness which is the first serious symptom of starvation before we reached the tiny hamlet of Gaundar. Here we obtained a few handfuls of flour, which provided us with a meal not easily to be forgotten.

When we returned up the Rishi Ganga in September we found that a great many landslips had occurred in our absence, and there were signs that the rains must have been terrific.

Exploring the southern section of the Nanda Devi basin was not difficult. We climbed a peak of over twenty-two thousand feet on the southern rim of the basin, and from the top we obtained a view of the mighty ranges of Western Nepal, a wonderland for some future generation to explore.

We also succeeded in reaching an altitude of about twenty-one thousand feet on the great southern ridge of Nanda Devi herself, and were able to work out with the eye what I think will prove to be a practical route to the summit.

Then came the final *bonne bouche* of the expedition, when we succeeded in crossing a nineteen-thousand-foot gap in the southern wall of the basin, by which Hugh Ruttledge and Guide Emil Rey had tried to enter the basin in 1932. We found the ice-fall on the southern side to be extremely difficult, and were frequently forced to lower our loads and ourselves over the ice-cliffs, and, while the gap afforded us a means of escape from the basin, it would have been a very much severer task to tackle it in the reverse direction.

In the high mountains there were signs of approaching winter. Our little season of supreme happiness was at an end. There followed the marches back over the wooded foothills, whose ravishing beauty must leave an indelible memory with all those who have travelled amongst them. Behind us, floating in the upper air, were the giants whose presence we had just left.

So, at Ranikhet, ended five crowded months among some of the most glorious mountains in the world.

XXXI

ROUND MOUNT WADDINGTON ON SKIS

by WING-COMMANDER E. B. BEAUMAN

WE left Vancouver and made our way northwards for nearly a month, across more than a hundred miles of lonely and mountainous country, inhabited only by an odd trapper or two and the wild animals; through deep snow-drifts, dense forests and precipitous canyons. At last we succeeded in establishing a light camp on the glacier, near the foot of Fury Gap. It was by this as yet unclimbed pass that we hoped to make a crossing of the Coast Range of British Columbia. So at dawn on April 18, 1934, the ski party, consisting of Sir Norman Watson, the organizer of the expedition, Camille Couttet, a French Alpine guide, and myself, said good-bye to our companions: Clifford White, who had injured his knee, E. J. King, and four Canadian trappers. We were very sorry to leave them, as they had done so much to help us on our way, but without ski they could go no farther; so we roped ourselves together, shouldered our heavy packs, with the ski tied to them, and set off.

More than two thousand feet above us rose the snow ridge, lit by the early morning sun.

At first progress was good, but soon the slope of ice and snow grew steeper, and we had to cut footholds in its hard surface with our ice-axes. Three-quarters of the way up we came upon a serious obstacle—a deep and broad crevasse running right across the face of the mountain. There was no snow bridge by which it could

be crossed, and it really looked as though we were defeated already. There was only one thing to do: as a last resort Couttet, held by the rope, leapt over the chasm and managed to cling on to its farther side with the point of his ice-axe. Watson and I soon followed, and before long we had hauled our heavy packs and ski up after us. By this time we were getting near the top of the Divide. As we climbed the last slope we waved to the others whom we had left on the glacier below. This was the signal for them to break all camps immediately and to return to Vancouver by the way they had come. This route would take them at least ten days. From now on, until our arrival at Knight Inlet, we of the ski party were to be completely cut off from the outside world.

On the summit of Fury Gap, nine thousand feet up, we paused for a few moments to rest and examine the country which lay before us. A few hundred feet below the pass we saw the great ice-stream of the Franklin Glacier, nearly twenty-five miles long, winding towards the Pacific Ocean, which was hidden in the distant haze. It was down this immense glacier that we had to find our way. There was no time to be lost, and Couttet aroused us with the remark: "Nous sommes seuls dans l'immensité; en avant!"

So once again we set off. We were now on the farther side of the range, and after climbing down a steep slope, held by the spikes on our boots, we reached the vast upper plateau of the glacier. Here we put on our ski, but to our annoyance we found that the snow was wet and soft, and the wooden planks refused to slide, so we plodded along painfully in the heat and glare of the midday sun. On all sides of us stretched great snowfields,

topped by rocky peaks, and we felt like the last surviving inhabitants of some lost and frozen world.

Before long the huge western face of Mount Mystery (Mount Waddington) came into view, only three or four miles distant. This fine peak, thirteen thousand two hundred and sixty feet high, is the second highest mountain in Canada, and higher than any of the Rockies. The approaches to it are so inaccessible that it was not discovered until 1922. Since then attempts have been made from the Pacific side to climb its highest summit, but so far without success, although the Canadian mountaineers, Mr. and Mrs. Munday, and the American explorer, Henry Hall, junior, have reached its second peak, which is only a few feet lower.

When we saw it the rocks were thickly covered with ice and snow, and it would clearly have been impossible even to attempt the ascent. But under the best of conditions it will always be a problem for the mountaineer although I have no doubt that one day its highest point will be scaled.

Towards evening the glacier became rougher and more broken, and we were soon threading our way through a maze of deep and broad crevasses. By this time we had been going for more than twelve hours, and had reached a point about sixteen miles from Fury Gap, so we decided to try and make a camp for the night. We climbed a steep side-slope and found a small plateau in the snow, where we pitched our little Everest tent. It was intensely cold, and inside the tent we were glad to huddle together for warmth. Sleep was out of the question, and during the night we heard some animal rummaging among our precious food supplies, which we had had to leave out-

side, but luckily we managed to scare it away with an electric torch.

The next morning dawned fine and clear. We climbed some rocks with our ski on our backs, skirted a difficult icefall, and so made our way back to the glacier. For the first time the snow was in good condition for ski-ing, but among other things we were carrying six days' food supplies, a hundred and twenty feet of rope, a woodman's axe for cutting down trees, a tent, warm clothing, and numerous other odds and ends, and we did not find it easy to keep our balance with these heavy loads. In spite of this, we were able to run down the last eight miles over snow and ice in a very short time, and by six in the morning we had reached the end of the glacier, only five hundred feet above sea level, and eight miles from salt water. We began to hope that by nightfall we should be sleeping again in real beds, and having our first bath for nearly five weeks. Little did we know of the difficulties which still lay ahead of us.

From the end of Franklin Glacier the river flows for eight miles towards Knight Inlet on the Pacific. On each side of it rise steep hills, about three thousand feet high, densely covered with trees and underbrush. At first we were able to follow along the rocky shores of the glacier torrent, but soon we came upon the inevitable canyon, which drove us up into the steep wooded slopes. Here we decided to abandon our ski, for in this sort of country they would only be a serious hindrance. Before long we found ourselves in the middle of a fantastic forest of immense Douglas firs, through which it became more and more difficult to force a way. In and out, up and down, through the tangled undergrowth we zig-zagged.

Branches struck us in the face and great fallen tree-trunks tripped us up, while the prickly Devil's Club covered us with its poisonous thorns. And now there was always a chance of meeting one of the grizzly bears, of which large numbers wander in these forests. If we had been unlucky enough to do so, armed, as we were, only with ice-axes, there is little doubt as to who would have won!

Hour after hour we struggled on, hardly knowing the direction in which we were going. Suddenly, to our great relief, the trees thinned out, and we found ourselves on the farther side of the canyon. Here we started burning wood fires, in the hope that anyone who might have come to the Inlet to meet us would see the smoke and know that we were approaching. But soon came another canyon, which forced us back into the woods. We were now on the side of the last hill; beyond it lay the water. As we neared the sea the brush became thicker and thicker. We struggled through it wearily, while overhead two eagles soared in circles as if to mock our feeble efforts.

Dusk had fallen when suddenly we came upon a smooth wall of rock. There was nothing for it but to plunge down in the darkness to the river shore. Here we were greeted by swarms of hungry tiger-mosquitoes, so we waded through the icy-cold water of the river to a sandbank, where we threw ourselves down to rest. We had been going hard for fourteen hours, and Couttet, who had borne the chief burden of the day, fell asleep as soon as his head touched the ground. But Watson and I only dozed. We were anxious about the next day. On the one side of us rushed the fast-flowing Franklin river, while on the other was an impassable wall of rock:

and through the trees, only a quarter of a mile away, Knight Inlet gleamed in the moonlight.

But on the following day the mountains had relented, and by keeping close to the river bed we were able to cut our way through the final four hundred yards in an hour and a half. As we left the last of the trees we came upon a marvellous scene: the calm blue waters of the Inlet mirrored the snowy peaks and green forests, while from its surface hundreds of great white gulls rose, screaming at our approach. But more wonderful still to us, a little way out a motor-boat lay at anchor. We had arrived! Couttet blew shrilly on his whistle, while Watson and I waved and shouted. Then, to our delight, an Indian came paddling over the still waters in his canoe. We quickly crowded into it, and on reaching the motor-boat we awakened a sleepy Norwegian, who showed no surprise on seeing us, although he had been waiting for five days. He said that he had orders to wait until our arrival, so he knew that in the end we should come.

As the little motor-boat chugged its way placidly down the great Inlet, we turned to take one last farewell of our Valley of Adventure. While we gazed the giant trees guarding its entrance seemed to press more closely together, and once again Mount Mystery was left in peace to brood over its wild ice kingdom, inhabited only by the wolves and bears.

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XXXII

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

by HARRY J. GREENWALL

SPEAKING as a special correspondent who has travelled far and wide in search of news, I should like to begin by pointing out that in the true sense of the words a reporter has no business to live dangerously; a dead or injured reporter is no more use to his newspaper than one who does not bring back a "story", as we call what you call a "piece in the paper". Incidentally, we reporters do not like that nursery manner of telling small children they are "telling stories", when in point of fact they are actually doing what none of us ever do, of course: "faking a story". But is there not a dangerous habit growing up of pretending to live dangerously in order to please some of the new type of synthetic editors who think their readers prefer imaginary thrills instead of news?

The only times when a special correspondent who knows his job lives dangerously is when by accident he walks into danger—when, in other words, he is just doing his ordinary job of work.

One day early in November 1918 I received a cable in Paris from Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld saying: "Are you prepared to go to Constantinople as our special correspondent? If so, go to Berne, and await instructions." I went to Berne, but did not go to Constantinople. A few days after I arrived in the Swiss capital the Armistice with Germany was signed, so I jumped in a train

for Vienna, and then, after some amusing adventures, managed to reach Berlin just ten days after the signing of the Armistice. I had the satisfaction of being the first British correspondent to reach the German capital after the Armistice, and although the journey was difficult, I really could not say with any truth that it presented real dangers, though it provided me with plenty of thrills.

There were more thrills, and perhaps a few moments of danger in store. The second German Revolution broke out in December 1918, and was apparently worse and more sanguinary than the first. One morning I was walking along the Friedrichstrasse when a tank started firing, so I threw myself flat on the pavement, next to a young Chinese student, who yelped like a puppy. Every moment I expected to feel shooting pains in my back, but the tank stopped firing, and went on its way.

During the same revolution I was in bed one night in the Hotel Adlon when there was a knock at the door; two German soldiers stood there with a light machine gun, and asked my permission to install it in my window. I told them to ask the manager, and went to sleep.

A few weeks later, when I was in my bath, there came another soldier, with a fantastic story. He said that a group of German officers were going to arrest me. I told the manager, who telephoned the Wilhelmstrasse, and so for a week I had an armed guard outside my bedroom door in the Hotel Adlon. That was rather fun. All these things happened during the Armistice, when the German people were still hungry and a little crazy.

An American journalist friend of mine living in another hotel came to see me, but the shooting outside along Unter den Linden was so fierce that he could not

go back to his hotel, so he shared my room for three days. It was dangerous to look out of the window, so we balanced my shaving-glass on the ledge, at an angle that gave us a room with a view; we called it the *revolution de luxe*; and it was all right until a bullet fired from the top of the Branderburger Gate shattered the mirror. But even then, although literally besieged, we did not really risk our lives. The Germans were so efficient that we were able to telephone our stories from the hotel to the post office for cable relay.

Revolutions and I are old friends. I have "covered", as we say, a good many in Portugal. One of the most exciting happened to be the biggest since King Manoel was obliged to flee the country. I had started from Paris to go to Oporto, but hearing *en route* that the revolution had spread to Lisbon, I switched off to that destination.

The chief hotel adjoins the railway station, and may be reached through a tunnel, which I found very useful when the city was in pitch darkness and everybody was shooting. I walked in with a bag and a portable typewriter, and found the lobby packed with distressed humanity; people were even dozing in dozens on the stairs, and I had visions of myself sleeping on a billiard table; but the clerk, in response to my request for a room and a bath, handed me a key, and up I went in a lift, with a valet carrying the bag and typewriter. Walking ahead of the valet along the corridor to my room the man began to talk to me, but I speak no Portuguese, and I thought he was just giving me what we call the "low down" on the revolution. I unlocked the door, switched on the light, and then—bang, bang, bang, smash! I

dropped prone on the floor, and the valet tried to beat the hundred yards record along the corridor.

That dear soul of a hotel clerk had given me one of the rooms nobody wanted—what I might call one of the “living dangerously” rooms facing up the Avenue Libertad; the rebels held the hills overlooking Lisbon, and when they saw a light in a window they shot at it. There was plenty of broken glass, but no broken bones!

Some of my younger colleagues seem to be always getting themselves arrested or expelled, or threatened with expulsion, or the like. Only once was I ever threatened with expulsion by a foreign Government, and then they had made a mistake, and mixed me up with another correspondent. When threatened with trouble a good correspondent stands not on the order of his going: he goes to the nearest big city in the next country and telephones or cables his story from there. Thus it has fallen to my lot to send stories about Poland from Germany, and stories about Roumania from Hungary, and so on. The first thing is to get the story, and the next thing is to get the story to the paper; nothing else really matters.

Flying has become so safe that a reporter is not taking any real risk in travelling by aeroplane, although I do recall that not so long ago I took off with a photographer from Heston in a Puss Moth to fly to Berne, which is an unlighted aerodrome—which means that one cannot land there at night. We were tossed about like a cork in a torrent, and we took an hour to reach Lympne, where we came down; and I did not go up again. The pilot had started off without a weather chart, so discretion became the better part of journalism. We continued our journey

by ship and train; had we crossed the Channel by air these words would never have been written. The Alps are not suitable country for forced landings.

What was the greatest thrill of my career? Undoubtedly my first visit to Russia. It was just after the Arcos raid, when diplomatic relations between Russia and Great Britain had been broken off. British citizens in Russia had no protection of any kind. I knew that I was running a certain amount of risk, but I wanted to go.

I shall never forget crossing from Poland into Russia on that occasion. A blood-red sunset followed a violent thunderstorm. The train moved slowly across the frontier, which was guarded by Soviet soldiers. I looked behind me at the illimitable rolling plains of Poland, and I felt that I was entering a prison from which I might never return.

But I spent that summer at Le Touquet.

XXXIII

OUT WITH A CAMERA FOR NEWS-REELS

by TOMMY SCALES

IN 1905, when I first entered the animated picture business—as it was called then—all pictures were more or less “topical features”, and News-Reels were unknown. Everything was “a film”: street-scenes of London, accidents and so forth. Unless some special event had to be covered, a typical day would be very much as follows:

The entire staff would go out to Ealing, where we rented a field, and a rough story would be written on the spot, usually a slapstick chase comedy—one minute you would be a cyclist falling off a cycle, and the next a policeman chasing the cyclist, and then you might find yourself turning the camera handle for a change. This would go on for five or six hours, scenes being added or alterations made as we went along; and then we all went back to the dark-rooms in town where we developed and printed our “shots”, each of us employed in some technical capacity.

About this time King Edward VII was making an industrial tour of the provinces, and we had been asked if we could photograph the various incidents of the tour, and show them the same night in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, etc.—a considerable job in those days. I was chosen as one of the party for this task—and it was a task! We packed two cars with portable developing and printing gear, and off we went. Fitting up in cellars and theatre dressing-rooms; turning the

camera on parades, reviews and the laying of foundation stones; rushing off to our temporary headquarters, developing and printing, projecting the films in the local Theatre of Varieties (there were no picture palaces), packing up and travelling to the next town during the night—and so on through the tour. It was not dangerous, but you must admit that it was strenuous.

I well remember one assignment which was allotted to me in the early days. I was commissioned to make a picture with the Folkestone fishing fleet, and at dawn I sailed in a five-handed smack from the harbour. The weather was glorious, and as soon as it was light enough I got to work with the camera, recording the simple and picturesque operation of line-fishing. After a few hours a real south-wester sprang up. It blew so hard that we had to take the sails off the smack, and we rolled around like a cockle-shell. They tied me to the mast and lashed my camera to the deck, and I tried to carry on, but alas! sea-sickness was too much for me, and I slowly drooped and sagged in my lashings. The storm lasted for forty-eight hours, and we drifted for miles. It was three days before we made Folkestone, and I was carried ashore unconscious. A week later I was told to finish the picture, and I confess to dreading the next trip; but this was the only time I was ever sea-sick, and I have ploughed many thousands of miles over the seas since then, in all kinds of craft.

Just after this I toured Germany for the first time; the spy scare was very bad just then, and I, in all innocence, managed to get into trouble. It was in Hanover; the scene was a military parade in the principal square, which I thought would make an interesting item, but I

had hardly set my camera and begun to turn the handle before I was grabbed by the police and bundled off to the police station, camera and all. I cannot speak German, and my explanations, effected mainly by gesture, would have made even Charlie Chaplin envious. Eventually an English-speaking official appeared, and although my papers and my explanations were in order, I had to destroy my film before they would release me.

I have not missed filming a Derby, except for the period of the Great War, since 1906; I have filmed more Grand Nationals than I care to remember; and all the big fights. I filmed King Edward's funeral, King George's coronation, and the Prince of Wales' investiture. I have climbed the riggings of ships for unique angles, and high buildings for elevated shots. I have walked narrow scaffolding, hundreds of feet above the ground, when filming the launching of ships; I have been down in a submarine, to take under-water pictures; I have had to do dozens of other more or less venturesome things in the course of my career; but nothing can compare with my first aeroplane trip. Much to my regret, I have never kept a diary, and so my stories have to be told from memory.

It was at Hendon in 1910. Flying, in the early days, was "meat" for a ciné-camera man, and I spent many days filming the planes careering around the pylons on London's first public flying-ground. Crashes were frequent, and I got any number of good pictures. A morbid occupation, perhaps, but thrilling. I made hosts of friends while hanging about the aerodrome. Many of you will remember the early names: Grahame White, Gustave Hamel, Handley Page, Tom Sopwith, Colonel

Cody, Rolls. . . . One day I got my chance—the offer of a “flip” in a Farman biplane. I had to balance my camera on my knee. The picture, by to-day’s standards, would be thought poor enough, but then it created a sensation. Since then I have travelled in all types of ‘planes, all over the world; I have experienced forced landings and all sorts of other accidents, but have never felt so queer as I did at Hendon.

In August 1914 I was on holiday with my family when the Great War broke out. I was urgently recalled to London, was given a few minor assignments, such as the first captures of German ships on coming into port, the arrival of early refugees, etc., and then I was sent to Belgium. Ostend was the headquarters of the cameramen, Press photographers, and journalists. Daily, at first, in company with Grant of the *Mirror*, Marshall of the *Mail* and other colleagues, we motored to the front—that is, when we could find the front. Now and again we would run into a skirmish, and get what pictures we could of the rearguard actions of the brave Belgians. Those were risky trips, for we never knew when we should find ourselves in the thick of things.

My most exciting experience in those early days was in Ghent. I had been getting some good shots just outside the town, so I decided to stay the night instead of returning to Ostend. Out early next morning, I made my way to the Hôtel de Ville, where one could usually get information. Imagine my consternation when I found the place in the hands of an advance guard of German cyclists! I routed out my chauffeur and car, we hurriedly packed my camera and gear, and off we went along the canal road to Bruges . . . but we were by

no means out of the wood, for a few miles along the road we overtook a posse of German Uhlans! At first I did not recognize them as Germans, but when the truth dawned on me I also realized that we were flying a Union Jack on the bonnet of the car. I reached out quickly with the camera tripod and knocked it off. It was a close shave, but they did not stop us, and we raced onwards to Bruges and Ostend. That night I stayed in Ostend, hoping to get some good shots of the Germans' arrival next morning, but I was lucky to get away on one of the last fishing-boats to leave the port. Back in England I took a few days to recover my breath. I convinced my Editor that it was now hopeless to attempt further work in Belgium unless I was attached to some official body, so I got his permission to join the Belgian Red Cross, taking a camera as personal baggage.

I had made friends with a man named Brice, a Belgian attached to the Red Cross, who said he could get me to the front line outside Nieuport Bains. This was just what I wanted—pictures of the front: a scoop! We were then at Furnes, and our plan was to get as near the front as we could in a Service bread-wagon. We managed to smuggle ourselves to within a mile of the front line; the rest of the way we tramped with camera, tripod and film. We were received quite well by the Belgians—incidentally, we had brought cigarettes, socks, and woollen gloves. We stayed a night with them, and got plenty of pictures. When it came to getting back we had to walk; no small effort with a hundredweight of camera gear! However, all went well until we ran into a French outpost, who promptly arrested us. We were hauled before the Commanding Officer, a Captain of Artillery,

and accused of being spies: which was natural enough, for in those early days almost anybody was liable to be suspected of being a spy. Remember, we had been smuggled to the front in a bread-cart, and we had arrived unannounced from the direction of the German lines. It took us forty-eight hours to talk our way out of that imbroglio!

Later on I joined the New Zealand Expeditionary Forces, and served through the rest of the war with them. I got my discharge in December 1918.

I was soon off on my travels again, and in February 1919 was sent to Germany to get pictures of the Allied occupation. I suppose I was one of the first civilians to cross the frontier. I made for Cologne. One evening I was returning to my hotel after 9 p.m.—which was “curfew time”—when I was hailed by a Military Police patrol, and asked why I was out of doors after the proper hour. Explanations followed, and the Red Caps were finally satisfied as to my credentials—but not too readily.

I travelled from Cologne to Ostend by car, getting as many pictures as I could. I cannot express what I felt when standing on the historic battlefields of the Somme—Messines and Ypres—so soon after the fighting—except that I had a feeling that I was standing on sacred ground.

On Boxing Day, 1921, I left London for Cannes to “cover” the famous peace meeting between Mr. Lloyd George and M. Briand. For two days things were quiet. I was taking shots of the various meeting-places and personalities, when, on the morning of the now famous golf match, I received a cable from my Editor in London, telling me to go to Cairo, as trouble had just broken out in Egypt. I made a dash for the train to

Marseilles. On reaching Marseilles I had a bare five minutes to get my *visa* and dash for the boat. I was short of money, as none had arrived from London, so I managed to mortgage my camera with the purser, who agreed to give me passage to Port Said, where I should find money waiting. All went well until I got to Egypt, and then the Customs seized my apparatus. Forty-eight hours later I managed to clear it, and went on to Cairo. I soon discovered that life was none too easy for Englishmen in some parts of Egypt just then, so in order to get the pictures I wanted I grew a moustache and practised the gestures of a Frenchman. This enabled me to penetrate into the meaner quarters of Cairo, and I got some good results. Incidentally, while I was in Egypt I managed to get the first camera interview of King Fuad, who was then Sultan.

Later in the same year, 1922, I made two trips to America in search of material; and then, in August, I sailed in H.M.S. *Hood* for South America and the West Indies, where I had many interesting and novel experiences.

“Sound” burst into the film trade in 1928, and it was then a question of re-learning my craft. So I went to America again in 1929, this time without a camera. I studied sound recording for three months—and then the first picture I was given to cover was one of a deaf and dumb school!

Back in England in May 1929, I made the first “talkie” interview for British Movietone News of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald’s Labour Cabinet. This picture undoubtedly opened up a new field for News-Reels, with the results which you now see every day of the week.

Recently I have had the honour of directing the operations of that energetic band of camera-men who gather the news for *Movietone*.

Let me conclude by advising you, if you want adventure, to take up the job of a News Film operator. He goes up and down upon the face of the earth like a modern Ulysses, whose Golden Fleece may lie in half a dozen different countries in the space of a month.

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OTHER DANGERS

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XXXIV

. AN EAST END DETECTIVE EX-DETECTIVE SERGEANT B. LEESON

DURING my twenty years of criminal investigation work, I have been engaged in every class of crime mentioned in the criminal code, and I can truthfully say that all that time I was always living dangerously.

Of course, I never witnessed a murder, because in this country it is the first duty of a police officer to prevent crime, but I have, more than once, been too near the scene to be pleased.

The sort of murders that curdle your blood and take your breath away are best left to the novelist. I have never experienced a thrill in a murder case yet; they have never brought me anything but hard work.

Some years ago Whitechapel—for that was the district in which I did most of my police service—could claim to have more criminals, juvenile and habitual, than any other district in London.

There were men and women who boasted of having been convicted a hundred times, and still defied the police. There were even gangsters whom Capone and Dillinger might have envied. It may surprise you to learn that the gangs which used to exist in the East End of London were just as fierce and dangerous as any that have ever infested Chicago.

I kept in close touch with the gang problem, and I did my share in wiping it out, but I met with plenty of rough handling while carrying out this duty.

There was the "Blind Beggar Gang". Why it was called this I never knew. Even to this day I often see relics of this organization, which flourished thirty and forty years ago. They are now old men and harmless, but they could tell some tales worth hearing!

The "Bessarabians", or the "Stop-at-nothing" gang, were the greatest menace London has ever known. The public little guess how much they owe to the Metropolitan Police for the fact that London to-day is free from a terror that made it—in the early days of this century—almost as dangerous a place as the Chicago Poop at its wildest.

This gang was composed of criminals from Russia, Poland and Roumania, with a sprinkling of Greeks, Tartars and gypsies. Their commonest methods of plunder were blackmail and robbery.

A mystery woman, who was known as "the Queen of Receivers", gave us a great deal of trouble until she was run to earth. We then discovered that she was the leader of the "German Burglar Gang", who were committing daring burglaries in all parts of London's suburbs. .

Because of their language, and the fact that they never associated with others outside the gang, it was extremely difficult to get in touch with them. It was not until the arrest of the gang that we were able to connect the woman with them.

This mystery woman was a German Jewess, who lived with her two sons in a sort of world of their own; so much so that her home address was miles from the scenes of burglary and the dive where we rounded up the gang.

But we had to spend weeks and months working on

the case before we were able to arrest them. Arriving at the woman's house early one morning, we were just in time to seize two large removal vans which were loaded with stolen property. They proved to contain a regular treasure trove—the proceeds of countless burglaries: jewellery, plate, medals, and valuables of all kinds.

Apart from the stolen goods, the rounding-up was so successful that within three hours twelve men and the woman were in the hands of the police and before the Court. It was the last case tried in the old Central Criminal Court.

The thirteen prisoners created a violent scene at the Old Bailey, and extra police had to be called in to overpower them. They were all found guilty. Their total sentences amounted to sixty-five years, the woman receiving seven.

I think I can claim to have made the first or earliest arrest of any police officer on record. It was within three hours of leaving Scotland Yard as a recruit.

I went straight to Leman Street, the principal station of my new division. First of all I was told to accompany an old police constable to my new home, which was in a street off the notorious Ratcliffe Highway. On the way he told me about policemen who had been murdered. He pointed out the worst possible alleys and courts, and particularly called my attention to Shovel Alley. It was said that no policeman dare go down it unaccompanied.

My new "digs" were not in the least encouraging, and to make matters worse my guide had deserted me, leaving me to find my way back to the station. Before I had gone

far I had lost myself completely. To my surprise I discovered that I had wandered back into the notorious Shovel Alley, which was a dirty, ill-lit court, enclosed between some twenty or thirty houses, or more accurately, hovels.

I was quickly noticed, and had a torrent of good-natured abuse thrown at me, such as "Copper lost himself?—do him in!" But my queerest feeling was when the hooligans gathered round me, singing "We kill all the coppers that come down our way!"

What might have happened I do not know, and I hardly care to think, but it may have been prevented by a blast on a police whistle. "Go on, why don't yer run? Are yer afraid?" the crowd shouted. It was then that something happened; they had noticed that I had no numbers. There was nothing on my collar, as I had been instructed to get my numerals at the stores in the morning.

Away in the direction of the sound we all ran, the crowd shouting, "He ain't a copper, 'cos he ain't got no numbers!" When we had covered about a hundred yards along I came abruptly into the lights of what I learned later was the "Sun and Sword" public-house, which was even better known as the "Shiny Knife".

"Come on!" yelled the crowd: "It's Joanna—she'll kill yer!" Without knowing quite how or why, I found myself on the ground. I wasn't even certain who was the offender, but Joanna quickly supplied me with the information. She had a chopper in her hand, and knocked off my helmet with it. The man she was fighting was the landlord of the public-house. Joanna had broken all but

one of his windows, and he was struggling to save the last one.

I was still wrestling with her, not knowing what was the best or next thing to do, when I heard a voice above my head say: "That's right, me boy, it's sure you're making a name for yourself!" This was Constable Jerry Lynch, who afterwards became my friend. He had rescued my helmet from the rowdy mob of boys, and helped me to take charge of my prisoner.

So it was this way that I made my first arrest, and amusingly enough without authority, for it is doubtful if I had been properly sworn in.

My next arrest also was made when I was with Constable Lynch. A few days after the Joanna affair I was with him again learning the beats, when a child rushed up and implored us to come to Shovel Alley, because, as she said, "Father is murdering Mother."—"Go on, youngster!" said Jerry, "you can run faster than me!" Away I went like the wind, and was quickly ahead of my mate. After running a few hundred yards I turned full speed into the alley, only to be met with a terrific whack on the head from an iron saucepan, the force of the blow smashing it—not my head, but the saucepan!—"Never mind," said Jerry, when he came up; "sure, it will make a man of you." My own impression is that he had known pretty well what was coming, because as he told me later, with a twinkle in his eye, the boys had promised to get up the show for him.

My first month of night duty brought me in touch with my first murder—perhaps the only one that almost thrilled me.

It was a wretched night, and all was still, when sud-

denly I was disturbed by the shrill scream of a police whistle, and I went off at top speed in that direction.

The call brought me to P.C. Thompson, whom I knew well, as we had served together, not so long before, as recruits on the drill ground. The spot was a railway arch known as Swallow Gardens, running from Royal Mint Street to Chamber Street in Whitechapel.

About midway along under the arch lay a woman with her head nearly severed from her body. She was still alive, but the wound in her throat was gaping so wide that articulation was impossible.

"What's up?" I asked.

"Murder, a Jack the Ripper job," answered my colleague.

Like myself, poor Thompson was inexperienced, and stood wondering what to do. At that moment I little thought that he was soon to be the victim of a similar tragedy, for shortly afterwards Thompson was stabbed to death in a street brawl.

If anyone has not heard of Jack the Ripper, all I can tell you is that he committed twelve of the most fiendish murders, and then mutilated his victims. Who he was will remain a mystery on the list of unsolved crimes.

During my career burglars, housebreakers, coiners, and the like came my way by the dozen, but I think the anarchists were the most dangerous of all.

First coming into prominence in 1908, the anarchists were responsible for the great strike of Jewish bakers in Whitechapel. It was run on American "racketeer" lines, and it fell to my lot to arrest their leader, Perkoff. Soon after came the tragic events at Tottenham, when a man-hunt across fields and through streets led to the

death of police and civilians. During the chase the desperadoes actually boarded a tram and used it as an armoured car.

Led by the notorious "Peter the Painter", the gang became stronger and stronger, and organized the Houndsditch outrages, which resulted in the wholesale shooting of police officers. Three were murdered on the spot, and many others were seriously injured.

Days and nights were spent in a real comb-out of the whole of the East End, and on the early morning of the 3rd of January, 1911, after a twelve-hour siege, the assassins were traced to their lair in Sidney Street, which afterwards became famous for the Siege of Sidney Street.

Here they were burned to death in the house in which they had taken refuge, and I was knocked off as a result of bullet wounds in my lungs and legs, which cut short my career as a detective.

But Peter the Painter had escaped, and caused much speculation as to his whereabouts, until it was said everywhere that he had returned to Russia.

I always doubted this and expressed the very definite opinion that he would turn up again. Still, I never thought that I should run into him.

I was in Australia on a convalescent trip. Walking into the booking-hall at Sydney Station, I came face to face with a man who seemed to me to look very like Peter. I had little time to spare, and hurried off to catch my train, thinking furiously all the while, until the train steamed out.

When we came to a standstill in a station—I think it was Wentworth Falls—on the way up to the Blue

Mountains, you can imagine my surprise and discomfiture when Peter the Painter stepped into my carriage. We were quite alone. I guessed he would be armed, and the way his hand strayed to his hip pocket confirmed my guess.

I tried to give no outward sign, but really I had the greatest thrill of my life.

Nothing happened, but at the next stop I got out and told a mounted police patrol.

In my business you never knew what was going to turn up next. It was living dangerously right enough.

XXXV

SPEED RECORDS

by SIR MALCOLM CAMPBELL, M.B.E.

I HAVE been asked to describe some of the most exciting moments of my life whilst racing and record breaking. As so many incidents of this nature have occurred to me during the long period I have been racing, it has not been easy to decide which of these many episodes I should choose. However, I will describe four lucky escapes, since each one is indelibly imprinted on my mind, and will for ever remain so.

My first escape from disaster occurred at Brooklands on August Bank Holiday in 1912. I was racing a high-powered Darracq on that occasion, and was particularly anxious to win the principal race of the day.

Starting from the scratch mark, all went well for the first three laps; the car was running magnificently, and I realized, as I began to overhaul my competitors, that the race should be mine. In pre-war days all races used to end down the old finishing straight, and as we were coming off the Byfleet banking in the final run down to the finish, with only two cars immediately in front of me, my offside front tyre burst just as I was about to pass the leaders. We were travelling at well over 100 m.p.h. at the time, and instead of playing for safety and easing down at once as I should have done, I was so bent on winning the race that I continued on full throttle with the car swaying from side to side.

All the time I was trying to pull the car into the left

and into the straight, but with the right-hand tyre gone the car wanted to go in that direction.

Just as I thought I had succeeded the Blue Bird gave a mighty lurch, and the front wheel caught the concrete curb which lines the track. Instantly the wheel broke into fragments, and pieces were flying in all directions. I locked the steering hard over as the car jumped, and I knew the off-side rear wheel hit the same obstruction. Now, this may seem extraordinary, but nevertheless I can assure you it is absolutely true. It positively seemed an age before the back wheel hit the curb, yet in point of time not more than one-fiftieth of a second could have passed before crash went the back wheel too, this also flying in pieces. I was now on two wheels only, the two right-hand ones having completely disintegrated, and I went careering madly down the finishing straight with other cars tearing past me. I knew that if I applied my brakes all would be up, and I should slew right round, jump the ditch, and crash into the railings, so I merely hung on to the wheel, locking my remaining front wheel hard over to the left, and holding my clutch out.

It seemed that the car would never slow down, and I so well remember thinking that any moment the steering would break, and that then the car would turn over and both my mechanic and myself would be killed. I also remember that I was not frightened in the least, but felt very sad that my life was coming to such an abrupt end. We still tore on, and then suddenly I realized that we were nearing the grand stand, where there were literally thousands of spectators lined six and eight deep against the railings, and that I might run into them and

mow them down like corn. I became scarced instantly, not for my sake, but for theirs.

I crammed on the brakes and the car swung round, hitting the curb. The impact had the effect of stopping our mad career, and we ended up immediately opposite the paddock, my mechanic and I none the worse for our experience. I was told afterwards that the spectators were absolutely spell-bound; they all realized the great danger, but simply could not run away to safety. I still have some photographs at home of this event, which will always be engraved upon my mind.

Another miraculous escape from disaster also occurred at Brooklands, but at a much later date. As far as I can remember the episode which I am about to relate took place some time during the summer of 1926. My mechanic and I were out testing a racing car, and we were continually stopping on the track and making various adjustments. I should explain that the bonnet of the car I was driving was held in position by two straps, one at the front end and the other at the rear. We had just completed making a carburettor adjustment; my mechanic closed the bonnet and apparently fixed both straps, and starting up the motor, jumped in beside me, and off we went once more. My eyes were glued on the revolution-counter, as I was anxious to see what improvement, if any, we had accomplished by the latest adjustment.

We were now travelling at a speed of about 110 m.p.h. when suddenly I saw the front of the bonnet lift up, and before I could even put my hand up for protection it swung over and cracked me a terrific blow on the head. I was instantly rendered unconscious, but by the

grace of God my senses left me for a fraction of a second only, as I came to again in that minute period of time. I remember seeing my mechanic endeavour to lift the bonnet from my head, but owing to the enormous wind pressure he could do nothing. I could just see the open track in front of me between the top of the scuttle and the bonnet, which had pivoted on the rear strap, which was still in place, and I literally stood on my brakes. I succeeded in almost stopping the car before I became unconscious again, and when I came to, nearly half an hour later, I found myself in the paddock, surrounded by friends. At the time I could not remember how the accident had occurred, or what had actually happened, and weeks passed before all the incidents came back freshly to my memory. Of course, my mechanic, in his haste, had omitted to fasten the front bonnet-strap, and it was only when we got going at our top speed that the wind pressure lifted the front end up, and as the rear strap was fastened securely this allowed the bonnet to pivot on its rear strap and swing back. As my mechanic was sitting lower than I was he escaped entirely, and I received the full impact, fair and square on my head. It was a miracle that we both escaped, seeing that we were travelling so fast at the time.

On another occasion I was again testing a car at Brooklands, and whilst travelling down the railway straight at a speed in excess of 120 m.p.h., a rook suddenly rose immediately in front of me. I never saw the bird until he came into sight above my radiator. I just had time to duck, and with a crash he hit my little windscreens, smashing it to bits, and twisting the metal frame, while the remains of the bird grazed the top of

my head, tearing out some hair, but otherwise doing no further damage to myself or the car. I suppose one should really make a point of wearing a crash hat, but I never do so; the only headgear I ever wear is a small leather cap, which is really no protection at all, and I am more usually bare-headed. On the next lap round I slowed down to see if I could find the carcass of the bird, but nothing was to be seen; he had evidently been broken up into small pieces. I still have at home the remains of my windscreen, which I have kept as a souvenir of this episode.

Then I recollect another very lucky escape which I had on the occasion of my first visit to Daytona with the Blue Bird in 1928. The beach was in very bad shape, and after waiting for days for an improvement I decided to make my attempt on the record.

On my first run I entered the measured mile at a speed of 210 m.p.h., and just as we were leaving the end of the course I looked down at my instruments and saw that they were registering 220 m.p.h. The record then stood at 203 m.p.h., and I had therefore averaged approximately 215 m.p.h. Suddenly, without any warning, we hit a hummock on the course, the car leapt into the air, and I was almost thrown out, as in those days I was not strapped into my seat. I received the full blast of the wind in my face, my goggles were blown off, and next moment the car was broadsiding into the soft sand—all this taking place within full view of the spectators. I was certain that the end had come, for the car was almost out of control and was heading for the dunes, ploughing its way through soft sand. Instead of wrenching the wheel hard over I gradually worked the car on to the hard

surface area once more, but I had travelled more than a mile before I succeeded in getting her back on to the course again. By this time I had arrived at the far end of the beach where my mechanics were waiting for me. I was physically exhausted; my arms and wrists ached as they had never done before.

I knew that I had made the record easily on the first run, but had I sufficient strength left for the return journey? I knew that if I hit that same bump on the run back I was definitely finished, but I decided to carry on and risk everything. I turned the car round without stopping, as I realized that if I got out for a short rest, I should not be able to continue within the prescribed time-limit of half an hour.

I shall never forget the final race back. I seemed to have no strength left. I was waiting for the crash as we entered the measured mile, but as luck would have it we missed the bump and completed the distance without any further adventures. Our speed, however, on the second run was not so high as it was on the first, since the wind was now against us, but at all events we made a new record, the figure being 206·9 m.p.h.

I have long since become a fatalist, as I am convinced that we never leave this world before our time is up, or before our part in life has been played. I have had literally dozens and dozens of hair-breadth escapes during my career, and these have not by any means been confined to motor racing. I have been involved in aeroplane crashes, and have had some remarkable escapes; I have also had many adventures in the wilds of Africa, and was once taken prisoner by the Riffs.

AND THE UNKNOWN

XXXVI

INVESTIGATING HAUNTED HOUSES

by J. C. CANNELL

It may seem a little strange to you that I should choose, for my contribution to this series, the subject of haunted houses. And yet, when you come to think of it, it is not so strange. . . . Many thoughtful people hold that there is peril in tampering with the occult, and in trying to unravel the secrets of the Unknown.

As a Fleet Street journalist I have faced serious danger in the air and elsewhere in search of news, but I have never had such uncomfortable moments as when investigating, or attempting to investigate, haunted houses. Perhaps it was the waiting about for hours in cold, dark places, or perhaps it was merely imagination: I do not know, but I certainly felt a most peculiar chill during the whole time I was in what is said to be the most haunted house in England—a Rectory in Essex.

“It is a place of evil”, I was told in a warning voice by a clergyman, who had lived there until neither he nor his wife could stand it any longer. Certainly there is something extraordinary about the Rectory. Let me tell you the whole story.

First of all, I must explain that the Rectory is said to have been built over the crypt of a thirteenth-century monastery, though the building itself is only seventy years old. A nunnery, also, it is stated, was situated close to the monastery.

There is a legend to the effect that in the days when

the monastery and nunnery were both flourishing a young coachman fell in love with one of the nuns. The lovers became so infatuated that they decided to elope, but they were caught in the act. The nun was walled up alive and the coachman executed. That is the legend; and the nun figures persistently in the accounts given by the various people who have occupied the Rectory.

Three women, the relatives of a former Rector, declare that while together they have seen the nun on several occasions in broad daylight, usually on the lawn. Indeed, so frequent were the visitations of the figure that one of the drawing-room windows, outside which she generally appeared, was boarded up.

Here is another episode in which the nun is said to have figured. A new Rector, whom I may call Mr. G., had just moved into the house. With him were his wife and a maid who had been engaged in London.

All three worked hard, during the first two days of their occupation, in putting things straight. On the third day the Rector's wife, realizing that the servant had been working constantly, suggested that she might like to go for a ride on her bicycle, as a little relaxation. Here I must emphasize the fact that the Rector has personally assured me that at this stage not one of the three occupants of the house had heard that it was said to be haunted.

A few minutes after the girl had gone off on her bicycle—it was a fine October afternoon—she came running into the Rectory in a state of hysteria, her clothes covered with mud. She explained that as she was cycling past the front gate, she saw a hooded figure of a nun, and a second glance made her suddenly realize that she could see through the figure.

"I was so frightened," said the girl, "that I fell off my bicycle into the ditch."

The Rector and his wife both smiled and frowned at the story, and told the girl that she must have imagined the nun, but the maid was persistent. She was, she declared, quite sure of what she said.

"Why should I have fallen off my bicycle if there was nothing there?" asked the maid.

All the persuasions of the Rector and his wife could not prevent the girl from giving notice at once.

Dismissing the incident from his mind, the Rector went on with his work. He became aware of loud footsteps in the house, but took no notice of them. In the library and other places he heard mutterings, as of low voices. He heard signs, and occasionally something like a groan. Sometimes he heard a shuffling sound, as though of slippers feet. He was puzzled, but thought these noises were due to the age of the building, or to rats. It was a little startling to find, as he did one day, a human skull and bones at the back of a cupboard, but he was convinced that these were merely of antiquarian interest.

As the time went on, however, the Rector did not feel so sure that his simple explanations met the case.

The manifestations became more violent in character, and could not be ignored. The footfalls were louder, the mysterious noises and whisperings more disturbing. The Rector became deeply interested in the mystery of the whispering voices, which, he found, after some observation, appeared on most occasions to come from a wall in the corridor near his bedroom door, and to move along until they reached the solid brickwork of an archway, where they suddenly stopped as though they

had vanished into the wall. The whisperings sounded as though three people were muttering together.

One night the Rector, wishing to get independent observation, invited two or three friends to spend the night in the Rectory. One of them was a cavalry officer, who brought with him a loaded revolver.

The party took up a position on the stairs, the officer saying in a loud voice: "I shall shoot anything I see." He held his revolver ready to carry out the threat, for he was in earnest. Nothing happened, but when the party were just on the point of leaving the stairs there was a loud crash from the Rector's study below. The officer leaped almost the whole flight of stairs in one bound, bursting into the study with his revolver, while the others followed.

The crash had been caused by the violent throwing together of the wooden shutters inside the window of the study. Working on rollers, these shutters can be closed only by the exertion of considerable force. The Rector has told me that neither his wife nor the maid was ever able to draw them together, but always called him to do it. The shutter-closing was the only incident of an unusual kind which occurred that night.

Then there is the incident of the mysterious lights. One night, after choir-practice, the Rector's wife and the maid were returning to the Rectory when they noticed that lights were showing in a part of the building which was never used. They were puzzled, but concluded that the Rector had put the lights there for some reason. Casually, they mentioned them when he entered the house. When he heard what his wife had to say he ran

out again to look at the lights, which were still burning, but which vanished a little later.

The Rector decided to make an experiment, to discover whether the lights were the work of a hoaxter. He considered that the only thing he could do was to place real lights in the room in question, and observe how they looked from the spot where the other lights were seen. He placed two lamps in the room in the unused part of the building. Then, with his wife, the maid, a churchwarden, and some members of the choir, the Rector took up his position, to compare the effect of the real lamps with the "ghostly lights" which they had previously seen. The party were startled when they looked up, because they saw not two, but three lights, the third, according to the Rector's description, being dimmer than the other two, as though it were shining through horn. Each member of the party was certain as to the existence of the third dim light, which afterwards disappeared.

One of the most puzzling things seen by the Rector was a line of footprints in the snow. There was only one single line, as though the footprints belonged to a one-legged animal. They were much too large to belong to a bird, and resembled a cloven hoof more than anything else the Rector could think of. He followed the footprints, which ran in a straight line along the side of the building, and then stopped. The Rector found them continued in the snow on a window-sill high above the ground.

There are parts of the Rectory grounds, I was told, which none of the villagers will approach. The Rector's wife said that she never could induce the village women

to attend a Mothers' Meeting in the conservatory, for instance.

The manifestations usually became most violent just as the Rector and his wife were going to bed. So frequently was this the case that they were sometimes afraid to go upstairs. More than once the Rector, not so strong a man as his predecessor, was flung out of bed. The ghost seems to have been enough of a gentleman to spare the women of both families this indignity.

Sometimes the Rectory would become filled with horrible odours, and at other times with beautiful perfumes. While the Rector was at dinner one night a brick, which had apparently come from nowhere, crashed on the table beside him, only a few inches from his plate. Another night, while dressing for dinner, the Rector had just placed his clerical collar on a table behind him when he was struck on the back of the neck with the collar.

Twice pepper was thrown in the face of the Rector's wife, and once the Rector himself had a similar experience.

Hearing his wife cry out one day, the Rector ran upstairs, to find her on the ground with a mattress on top of her. She said she had been thrown to the ground and the mattress had been flung on top of her.

But here is something apparently even more serious. Answering his wife's cry on another occasion, when the Rector went upstairs to her bedroom he found her in a state of distress, but she would not tell him what had happened.

When I heard of the extraordinary manifestations at the Rectory, I decided to make an effort to investigate them. I took statements from several people who had

either lived there or visited the place. I had a talk lasting several hours with the Rector, to whom I have referred as Mr. G., and his wife. Their experience in the Rectory, which they related to me in the fullest detail, had greatly distressed them. The Rectory, they said, was never quiet for long.

"I prophesied, when I left, that the present Rector would have all this trouble," said Mr. G. "No doubt he smiled when he heard my prophecy, but I do not think he is smiling now."

I went late one night to the Rectory, which has nearly forty rooms, and is about two hours' journey from London. It is a rather lonely place; so lonely, in fact, that I wished I had never come to the spot. A thunder-blasted oak stands outside the Rectory, and gives the building the look of a genuine haunted house.

In response to my ring, the Rector's wife appeared. At first she was reluctant to discuss the matter, but when her husband came to the door she invited me into the drawing-room. They did not want any more publicity, she said. "There are people," she continued, "who say that I have been doing these things."

"Is it seriously suggested," I asked, "that you have been giving yourself black eyes, and throwing bricks about?"

She shrugged her shoulders resignedly, and said: "It has been hinted at. I know of one clergyman who says: 'Why don't these things happen at my house?'"

It was not necessary for Mrs. R. to point out to me how ridiculous was the theory that she was responsible, seeing that the manifestations had been occurring for years, long before she and her husband had come to the house.

I offered my services as investigator, pointing out that as Vice-President of the Magicians' Club and the author of *The Secrets of Houdini* I could hardly be regarded as a novice in these matters, but neither of them would agree.

"Things are quiet in this house now," the Rector said, in a low voice, "and I believe they will remain so."

Yet he said this, I thought, in the tone not of a believer, but of one who hoped. The Rector knew, and has in fact put it on record, that violent outbursts followed periods of quietude in the mysterious Rectory.

In vain I repeated my offer to stay the night and investigate. The Rector shook his head and said that he could not permit it. So, having lingered as long as possible, in the hope that some ghostly activities would begin, I said good night to the Rector and his wife, jumped into the taxi which was waiting for me outside, and was driven to the neighbouring Suffolk town.

As I sat in the taxi, I felt both sorry and glad that I had not been given the chance to spend a full night in the Rectory. Just before my visit there I had equipped myself with a few articles which I thought might be useful in laying the ghost. Visualizing the possibility that the Rector might give me a bedroom for the night, I had, first of all, provided myself with the means of fastening the bedroom door against all comers. If this were the work of a hoaxter, I thought, he would doubtless have a duplicate or skeleton key to the door of the room. To checkmate him here, I had obtained a door-wedge, which I should have screwed to the floor after pushing the narrow edge of it under the door. This would have made it impossible for anyone to open the door. But before fastening the door in this way I should have

smeared the outer handle with a special copying-ink, the marks of which would have clung for days to the hands of anyone who had even tried to unfasten the door. A few special screws for fastening the windows were also among my equipment, for window-fastenings are notoriously inefficient. The strewing of the floor of the bedroom with tin-tacks was another part of my plan, because I had to face the possibility that the intruder might have some secret means of access to the room. I provided myself, also, with a small pellet-discharging pistol and several small leaden paper-weights. I decided beforehand that if anything were thrown at me while I was in the Rectory I should quickly turn round and hurl a handful of paper-weights, or fire the pellets in the direction from which the missile had come. A length of stout cord, to bind my prisoner, if any, was tucked away in my pocket.

So far as fastening the door was concerned, I had an alternative plan which I could have put into practice, according to the circumstances. I should have tried to judge on the spot as to the likelihood that a hoaxter would run the risk of opening the bedroom door.

I repeat that it is a pity that I did not get the chance of employing this equipment.

Everyone who hears in detail this story of the Rectory ghosts asks me : "What do you think of it yourself?"

My answer is that you may choose as you please from several theories, which are :

That it is the work of a hoaxter. If this is so, and if he is ever caught, I shall seek him out, shake him by the hand, and tell him that he is the cleverest and most resourceful hoaxter of whom I have ever heard.

That the mysterious happenings are due to some

structural defect or peculiarity in the building. Many "hauntings" have without doubt been due to this cause. It is for you to decide whether you think that such an explanation would meet this case, with all its complexities.

That the manifestations are due to mysterious vibrations, which, according to some psychic theorists, persist in a place where a tragedy has occurred or violence has been committed—vibrations which, if they exist, science may be able to analyse and explain at some time in the near future. This is a distinctly interesting possibility.

That the house is haunted in the full sense in which the word is generally used. If this theory is accepted, it involves the belief that a "departed spirit" or a "poltergeist" has for some years been passing its time in bringing pandemonium into the house, and injuring and frightening innocent people. I shall make no comment on this theory, as I do not wish to be controversial.

One fact does emerge with certainty—that people of the highest reputation and integrity have testified that these things have happened in the Rectory.

Whatever their cause may be, the manifestations at the Rectory have provided what I consider to be one of the world's best ghost stories.

XXXVII

OCCULTISM IN INDIA

by COLONEL LIONEL JAMES, C.B.E., D.S.O.

It takes some courage to write of "Occultism in India".

The controversy over the so-called Indian rope-trick has started all over again. On the one hand we have the spokesman of a body styled the "Occult Committee of the Magic Circle", who tells us pretty vigorously that the Indian rope-trick is no more than a legendary myth.

On the other hand, there are living witnesses of repute, who, *pace* the Magic Circle, maintain that they have actually seen this rope-trick performed.

I myself have never seen it. But manifestations flavouring of the occult are not confined to this much debated rope-trick.

When in India I was for several years the agent to a large landed property. The tenants in one corner of this estate included a family of professional jugglers. The patriarch of this family assured me that, although it was not in his family's repertoire, the rope-trick *was* performed by a limited and very highly specialized type of juggler.

Like all members of his strange profession, this old man was very secretive and guarded in all matters relating to his craft. Secretiveness, in fact, is one of the pillars of the juggler's edifice of magic.

Probably this secretiveness is the answer to the anti-rope-trick enthusiast's emphatic claim that the trick, or illusion, *must* be a myth, because no Viceroy or other

powerful satrap has been able to command a juggler to perform it.

Possibly the sceptics have never heard of Atma Ram!

Atma Ram is an evil tradition with all Indian jugglers. Atma Ram, they say, was a renegade juggler who divulged to the laity many of the most treasured and sacred secrets of the juggler's art. Every Indian juggler of standing, before he opens his performance, will produce and spit upon an effigy of Atma Ram. This is an obligatory ritual. You may judge of the significance of such a rite.

If any of you have ever had the good fortune to hear a military lecture by the late Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, you may remember that after a lucid marshalling of his facts, if the evidence happened to be conflicting, he would suggest that his listeners should maintain an open mind.

"These are the facts as we see them. As to the ultimate outcome—*I do not know!*" was a favourite phrase with the Field-Marshal.

And in his words, as regards this controversy over the Indian rope-trick, I must say "I do not know!"

Well, I will content myself with quoting to you the ripe opinion of Sir Walter Lawrence, who spent most of his service as an Indian civilian in Native States, was private secretary to Lord Curzon during his Viceroyalty, and was selected to be Chief of the Staff to King George when His Majesty toured in India.

At the close of this experience, Sir Walter wrote :

"There are many strange fields of thought and experience in which Indians move, ignored or taken for granted

by the matter-of-fact people from the West. . . . There are many mysteries in India which I cannot explain—yet cannot ignore. I have been the unwilling patient of collective hypnotism, a kind of *illusion consentie*."

Sir Walter relates in good faith the following inexplicable adventure:

"One day I experienced a curious illusion. It was in the break of the rains, I went out one evening by myself to shoot. The ground was familiar to me, but it was all changed. There was a large lake where I had formerly walked, and on this lake was a punt with a paddle. I got in and paddled by the high bank of the lake to a little green promontory. On it, by the edge of the lake, sat a most beautiful girl. I asked her what the name of the lake was, and where her village was, but she laughed and shook her head and said nothing. I paddled on, landed on the opposite bank, and walked home. I was quite well and had no fever. I could remember every detail of the place, the dress and face of the girl, and a few days later I went back to the lake. There was no lake and no sign of a punt in the neighbourhood. Hallucination? I do not think so. I have seen so much in India of what we in England would call the supernatural that I have an open mind, and I think that if we lived with the Hindus, apart from the influence of our own people, we should soon find that in that land of enchantment there is indeed more than is dreamt of in our philosophy."

But you may say that anybody could feed you with quotations. You want actual experience. You shall have it.

This is not the rope-trick. It is a personal experience

which to me is just as wonderful, and certainly just as inexplicable:

One evening, after sundown, three of us, young planters in Bengal, were seated in long chairs on the low circular masonry platform that is a common feature of the frontage of an Indian bungalow. My bearer presented himself, saying that there was a very celebrated travelling juggler who craved permission to give us his entertainment. The juggler arrived with his troupe. These comprised acrobats and contortionists.

The first part of the entertainment displayed nothing outside the ordinary curriculum of strolling players. The juggler then said that if we would guarantee him twenty rupees he would perform his masterpiece, which he maintained was "the greatest feat in the world".

Twenty rupees was an unheard-of sum to give to an itinerant juggler. The man was so persistent that we told him that if the performance came up to his boast we would give him the money; if it fell short of it we should reward him with corporal punishment. To this the juggler agreed, provided we could supply him with two properties.

The one was a native ox-wagon, minus the oxen, the other a hog-spear. Both these necessaries, of course, could be produced in a Bengal planter's establishment. The one, a great, lumbering two-wheeled vehicle, weighing nearly a ton; the other, a weapon, lead-heeled, so sharp of point that it passes through a wild boar as if the animal were just a pat of butter.

The juggler fixed the hog-spear along the single shaft of the ox-wagon, with the point outward. It was securely tied in this position.

The attendant crowd of household servants were then asked to mount the cart.

While the vehicle was being loaded in this way, the hands of the juggler were tied behind his back by an assistant.

The cart was balanced in such a way that the hog-spear along the shaft lay parallel with the ground.

The juggler then placed his forehead against the naked point of the spear, and, to our amazement, pushed the cart in a circle twice round the masonry platform upon which we were seated.

The weight of the cart was such that no single man could have moved it, even with his hands free. The spear-point was sufficiently sharp to have perforated the skin at a mere touch. Yet when the "illusion"—it must have been an illusion—was completed there was no vestige of a mark upon the performer's brow.

I do not venture an explanation of this remarkable phenomenon. Was it effected by what Sir Walter Lawrence has termed aptly *illusion consentie*? In the words of Sir Henry Wilson, I do not know.

When I published my version of this remarkable episode recently I received an unsought and unexpected confirmation.

General Sir Harry Watson wrote to me, and said that he had witnessed the same performance when he was the guest of the Maharajah of Bikanir in the Bikanir State.

The only difference in Sir Harry's description was that his juggler had improved upon the "turn" by producing a splash of blood on his forehead, at the point of pressure on the spearhead.

I do not even know if he was the same juggler. The

lapse of time between the two incidents is a matter of years, and the distance between Bengal and Bikanir must be about a thousand miles.

What we term occultism in the East might be susceptible of scientific explanation, if the scientists could give it their attention.

All thoughtful Europeans in India have observed the rapidity with which important news will travel without mechanical aid. With the advent of electricity as the rapid transmitter of information it has ceased. Europeans have lost interest in probing the mystery of the methods of intercommunication which have been practised for centuries by the natives.

If we go back to the days before wireless came into being, and when the ramifications of the railway and telegraph systems were restricted or non-existent, we have the established fact that the news of the assassination, in Kabul, of Major Cavagnari, the British Envoy, was known in Peshawar Bazaar within a few hours of the outrage, and two days before the Government of India learned of the distressing incident.

It is not claimed that the phenomenal speed at which important news may travel in India is, of necessity, effected by supernatural means. Nevertheless, an experience of my own suggests that in certain cases some natives possess powers of mental telepathy of which we in the West are ignorant.

Manipur is a small native State on the North-Eastern Frontier of India. Late in the last century, as had been the case with Major Cavagnari, the British Resident was murdered and his escort attacked. Manipur in those days was not connected with India by telegraph. It was a

matter of four days' or more travel by road before a telegraph line could be reached.

I was in Bengal at the time—that is, I was many hundred miles from Manipur.

On the morning after the day upon which the outrage had actually occurred my chief native clerk casually informed me that on the previous day the Europeans in Manipur had been murdered.

As there was no one in the district who could be interested in the affairs of Manipur, this casual statement, when it was first made, did not impress me. I thought it was an invention.

My interest was aroused when I realized, later, that the first news of the tragedy did not reach the Government of India in Calcutta until three days after I had heard it in my own verandah. This realization disturbed me, and I questioned my informant.

The clerk said that an itinerant soothsayer had spent a night in the house where he himself was lodging, and when in the evening the inmates had forgathered for their usual gossip the stranger had volunteered the information about the tragedy in Manipur.

It had occurred to none of the listeners to question the man as to the source of his information.

He was an itinerant Yogi and a bird of passage. My clerk suggested that, as such, his audience had accepted, as a maxim, that he possessed some such mysterious faculty as second-sight.

Those who have lived upon the slopes of the Himalayas know that the hillmen there have a method of vocal communication which to us is inexplicable. We know of no natural means by which the human voice, without

effort, can be projected so as to be audible at a thousand yards. Scientific research might discover a perfectly natural form of ventriloquism of which we in the West are ignorant.

Those who have come into closer contact with the natives of India than is the common lot of Europeans, are likely, on rare occasions, to meet with circumstances for which there is no explanation forthcoming in the philosophy of the West.

The rarity of such manifestations, perhaps, may be the hall-mark upon secret powers which are developed and handed down from father to son, through countless generations, and guarded by those who possess them as jealously as life itself.

“I do not know!” And here I must leave you : I trust with a mind as open as my own.

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